A MISCELLANY OF IRISH PROVERBS

O'RAHILLY

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OF

IRISH PROVERBS

COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY

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Sapientiam omnium antiquorum exquiret sapiens, et in prophetis vacabit.

Narrationem virorum nominatorum conservabit, et in versutias parabolarum simul introibit.

Occulta proverbiorum exquiret, et in absconditis parabolarum conversabitur.

—Eccli. xxxix. 1-3.

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PREFACE

In the present book I have made an attempt, however modest, to approach the study of Irish proverbs from the historic and comparative points of view. Its principal contents are, first, the proverbs noted by Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin about the year 1800, and, secondly, a selection of proverbs and proverbial phrases drawn from the literature of the preceding thousand years. I have added an English translation in every case.

Sometimes, as will be observed, the Irish proverbs correspond closely to English ones. When this is so, I have given (between quotation marks) the English version, either instead of or in addition to a translation. While it is probable that most of the proverbs thus common to the two languages have been borrowed into Irish from English, still it should be borne in mind that many of them possess an international character, and are as well known in Continental languages as they are in English or Irish. I have, however, refrained from quoting these Continental versions; any reader who is interested in them will find what he wants elsewhere, and it would have been a waste of space for me to attempt to give them here. Not a few of these proverbs have Latin

originals, from which the Irish versions may have been directly borrowed.

Most of the proverbs of the present collection are distinctively Irish in expression. It is mainly in connection with this "native" type of proverb that I have quoted, where possible, Scottish and Manx versions, and analogous proverbs in Welsh. When proverbs not derived from English are common to Ireland and Scotland, it is safe to credit them with an antiquity of three hundred years at least. So, too, the occurrence of proverbs of this class in widely-separated districts in Ireland bespeaks for such proverbs a respectable antiquity. But, even when evidence of this kind is wanting, it is probable that most of our "native" proverbs are very old, such is the vitality of tradition among Irish-speaking people.

Perhaps by no nation were proverbs held in higher estimation than by our ancestors. Even to-day every fluent native-speaker of Irish possesses a repertory of proverbs on which he delights to draw in order to clench an argument or drive home an opinion. The Irish view of proverbs is crystallized in such sayings as *Ní sáraítear an seanfhocal*, 'Nothing can beat a proverb.' Hence those of us who inherit the Irish tradition will, as I hope, not unfavourably receive this little storehouse of the sententious wisdom of our forefathers.

T. F. O'RAHILLY.

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	Micheál Óg Ó Longáin's Collection of Irish Proverbs	1
II.	Modern Irish Triads	65
III.	Proverbs in Irish Literature	79
IV.	Proverbial Phrases in Irish Literature	125
V.	Bibliography	147
	Abbreviations, etc.	159
	Indices	162
	Additional Notes	169

I.

MÍCHEÁL ÓG Ó LONGÁIN'S COLLECTION OF IRISH PROVERBS

1. Mairg 'gar beag leis Dia mar lón.

'Woe to him who is not content with having God for his sustenance.'

2. Giorra cabhair Dé ná an doras.

'God's help is nearer than the door,' *i.e.* is very near, even when we little expect it. Compare no. 75 below.

3. Fearr sean-fhiacha ná sean-fhala.

'Better old debts than old grudges.' This proverb is quoted by Seán na Ráithíneach: cf. ed. Torna, p. 75. It is one of the oldest proverbs in the language, for it is one of a number of old sayings attributed to Flann Fína mac Ossu, *i.e.* Prince Aldfrid, son of Oswy, King of Northumbria (*ferr senfiacha senfala*, Anecd. iii. p. 18). With a slight variation it also occurs among the sayings attributed to Fíthal (*ferr senfíach senécraite*, ed. Thurneysen p. 18). From Scottish Gaelic (*is fhearr sean-fhiachan na sean-fhalachd*) it has passed into N.E. as "Better auld debts than auld sairs."

4. Baodhach le gach bocht a bhfaghann.

'A poor man is pleased with whatever he gets.' Var. *Is baodhach le bocht beagán*, 'A poor man is glad of a little.' The adjective *baodhach* (*buidheach*) here is a modern substitution for the obsolete subs. *buidhe*, which is
* still retained in the Scottish form: *Is buidhe le bochd beagan.* The Irish *Is buidhe le bocht a bhfaghann* is humorously mis-rendered in English as "'Tis yellow with poor what he gets" by a character in Seán Ó Neachtain's Stair Éamuinn Uí Chléire (1.1927). The Manx form is *S'booiagh yn voght er yn veggan* (Cregeen). The proverb is a very old one in Gaelic, being found in the Book of Leinster (147b 42) in the form *Is súail ní is budi ri bocht*, 'Even a trifling thing pleases a poor man.' The N.E. "A poor man is fain o' little" seems to have been borrowed from Sc. Compare no. 83.

5. Ar uairibh thigid na hanacraí,—is fearr [san] ná a dteacht an éinfheacht.

'It is well that misfortunes come but from time to time, and not all together.' The Eng. proverb "Misfortunes never come single" is the reverse of this.

6. Gach bocht le muir is gach saidhbhir le sliabh.

'Poor men take to the sea, rich to the mountain.'

7. Ná tabhair taobh le fear fala.

'Trust not a spiteful man.'

8. Mairg 'na mbíonn fear a bhraite 'na chuibhreann.

'Woe to him whose betrayer sits at his table' This was doubtless suggested by the presence of Judas at the Last Supper: cf. Marc. xiv. 18-20.

9. Fada iarsma na droichbheirte.

'The effects of an evil act are long felt.' Var. *Fada deasga droichbheirte*. Cf. *Is fada an ciach bheir iarsma droichbheirte*, Comhairle na Bárrsgolóige. Canon O'Leary has *Is fada siar é iarsma an droich bhirt* (Séadna 167), and *Is fada anonn a théighean iarsma an droch-ghnímh* (Táin 166). The earliest instance I have noted is *Is fada deasgadh na droichbheirt* in an anonymous Ulster poem (17 cent.?) which begins "Do goineadh me ó bheith lom"; cf. 23 A 25, p. 81.

10. Cam ialla na conaire.

'Crooked are the thongs (?) of the path.' The meaning of this is quite obscure to me, nor have I met it elsewhere. Perhaps we should compare the Cork proverb *Más cam slighe is réidh ród* (GJ. 46, p. 209).

11. Ceannuig an droch-dhuine, is ní baoghal duit an duine macánta.

'Buy the trickster, and you need have no fear of the honest man.' Varr. *Breab an rógaire*, etc. ('Bribe the rogue'). *Seachain an drochdhuine*, etc. ('Shun the trickster'). *Coinnibh an drochdhuine leat*, etc. ('Keep the trickster on your side'), Galway.

12. Cionnus bheadh an t-ubhaillín acht mar bheadh an t-abhaillín?

'How could the apple be but as the apple-tree?' "Like tree, like fruit." "Arbor qualis erit talia poma gerit" (Erasmus). Compare Dánfhocail 105, and the two next proverbs.

13. Gach dalta mar oiltear.

'A foster-child is as he is brought up.' Sometimes with the rhyming addition: *agus an lacha ar an uisge*, 'and a duck takes to water.' The word *dalta* here is a modern substitution for *ealta*, 'flock (of birds),' which has long been obsolete in ordinary speech, though I heard a native of Ballyvourney quote the proverb in the form *Gach caltha mar oilthear* only last year. Other variants substitute *éan* for *ealta*. Thus *Gach éan mar oiltear, agus an naoscann san eabar*, 'Every bird as it is brought up, and the snipe in the mud,' Donegal. *Gach éun mar a dh' oileanar*, Sc. Cf. also Morris, 93 and 233. That the proverb is an old one is shown by the opening stanza of a poem by Tadhg Mór Ó Huiginn (†1315):

Cach én mar a adhba,
oirderc so, is sé lentar;
cach elta mar oilter,
ní chlechtfa acht a chlechtad,

(cf. O'G. Cat. 487), 'Every bird is as its nest,—this is a well-known rule that is followed; every bird-flock is as it is reared, it follows only its own habits.' Compare *cach macaom mar múinter*, 'every youth is as he is taught,' in the same poem; and *gnáth dúil i ndiaidh oileamhna*, 'every creature is wont to follow its upbringing,' in a poem on Nioclás Dall (*flor.* 1601), 'Studies,' 1920, p. 97.

14. Treise dúthchas ná oileamhain.

'Hereditary instinct is stronger than upbringing.' "Nature passes nurture." Cf. *Is sia théidheann an dúchas ná an fhoghlaim*, 'Nature goes farther than education.' *Briseann an dúchas trí shúile an chait*, 'Its nature breaks out through the cat's eyes.' "What is bred in the bone comes out in the flesh." Compare further no. 37, and Dánfhocail 102. The same idea is seen in a line of Aodh Ó Domhnaill's in the 'Contention of the Bards': *diallaid daoine re a ndúthchas*, 'people follow their hereditary instincts' (cf. I.T.S. xx. p. 138). Scottish has *Is buaine dùthchas na oilean.* *NGP220

15. Minic ná deaghaidh bó le bó dhúthchais.

'Often a cow does not take after its breed.'

This is to some extent contradictory of the proverbs just quoted.

16. Minic bhí gránna greannmhar is dathamhail donaoi.

'Often was ugly amiable, and handsome unfortunate.' Var. *geanamhail* (for *greannmhar*).

17. Ní hí an bhreághthacht do chuireann an crocán a' fiuchadh.

'Beauty will not make the pot boil.' Var. *a' beiriú* (for *a' fiuchadh*). Cf. *Ní breághthacht níos brochán ach min*, 'It is not beauty that makes porridge, but meal,' Conn. "Prettiness
* makes no pottage." *Cha toir a' bhòidhchead goil air a' phoit*, Sc. (and cf. Morris 156).

18. Fearr béasa ná breághthacht.

'Better good manners than good looks.'

19. Buan fear 'na dhúthaig.

'A man lives long in his native place.'

20. Níor cailleadh [fear] riamh i measg a chuaine.

'A man never fails among his own people.'

21. Seachain is ná taobhuig,
is ná tabhair an t-aitheantas ar aonrud.

'Be on your guard against taking sides, and on no account sacrifice your friends.'

22. Togh do chuideachta sul a suidhfir.

'Choose your company before you sit down.'
"Choose thy company before thy drink." ✝ NGP 352

23. Seachain droch-chuideachta.

'Shun evil company.'

24. Innis dam cia leis a raghair, agus inneósad duit créad dhéanfair.

"Tell me with whom thou goest, and I'll tell thee what thou doest." Var. *Innis dam do chuideachta is neósad cé hé thu*, "Tell me your company, and I'll tell you who you are."

25. Fiú oineach mall druideam 'na chuinnibh.

'Generosity which is dilatory is worth going to meet.' Cf. *Is fearrde an teachtaire mall druidim 'na chuinne*, 'A slow messenger is the better for your going to meet him.'

26. Olc an chú nách fiú í fead do leigean uirthi.

"It is an ill dog that is not worth the whistling."

27. Deineann ceann ciallmhar béal iadhta.

"A wise head makes a closed mouth."

28. Beagán agus a rádh go maith.

* 'Say but little, and say it well.' *Na abair ach beag 's abair gu math e*, Sc.

29. Binn béal 'na chomhnuidhe.

'The mouth that speaks not is sweet to hear.' "Speech is silvern, silence is golden." Var. *Is binn béal 'na thost*, Conn. Cf. *Níor dhin béal 'na chomhnuidhe aimhleas riamh.* See also Dánfhocail, 55.

* Sc. Far an tàine an abhainn is ann as motha fluaim. Cf. Songs of John MacCodrum, p. 256)

30. Ard fuaim na n-uisgí éadtroma.

'Shallow waters make a great noise.' Cf. *Soitheach folamh is mó torann*, "Empty vessels make the greatest noise," (which Begly, p. 190a, renders *Is iad na soithighe falamha is mó do ghnídh fuaim*). The proverb is alluded to more than once in the 'Contention of the Bards': *An t-uisge tana is mó fuaim, samhail sin le huaill do ghlóir*, Art Óg Ó Caoimh (I.T.S. xxi. 228); *sibhse an taobh tana don tsruth, uaibh do chluintear bhur dteannghuth*, Tadhg mac Dáire (ibid. 188); for a third instance see Dánfhocail 53. See also Dánfhocail 51 and 52, and compare the two next proverbs.

31. Rithid uisgí doimhnne ciúin.

"Still waters run deep."

* 32. Na muca ciúine dh'itheann an triosg.

"Still swine eat all the draff," *i.e.* A quiet

30. cf. Welsh: Bas dwfyr myn yt leueir (Early Welsh Gnomic Poems, p. 25)

exterior is often found in persons who are very wide awake. Var. *D'íosadh muc chiúin féin triosg*, Galway. Cf. *D'íosadh cat ciúin biadh. D'íosadh cat sleamhain féin fáideog. Itheann cat ciúin féin im*, Galway.

Sc. is e a' mhuc shèmlach is mò dh' itheas de'n treasg *

33. Deineann gach moch a ghnó.

'An early riser gets through his business.' Var. *Is cosmhail le gach moch a ghnó*, Clare. J. O'Daly's version (Watfd.) adds: *is ní le héirghe dhoich é*, 'but not by means of early rising.'

34. Eusga neóin ná maidean. * NGP 234

'Evening is speedier than morning,' *i.e.* Better do a thing in the evening than postpone it until next morning. "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day." This occurs in Micheál Coimín's Eachtra Thoroilbh (cf. ed. P. O Briain, p. 29); and also in some versions of Cath Muighe Mucruimhe (*Racham ann anocht, óir is éasga nóin ná maidin*, GJ. 207, p. 437b). This proverb, though found all over Ireland, and in Scotland too, has in later days * been nearly always misinterpreted. The meaning given above is amply confirmed by the literary instances referred to.

35. Bíonn an fear deireanach díoghbhálach.

'A late man brings trouble on himself.' 'The laggard is ever a loser.'

36. Minic bhí cú mhall subháilceach

'A slow-footed hound often has good qualities.' Varr. *Is minic a rug an chú mhall féin ar a cuid*, Galway. *Is minic cú mhall sona*, 'A slow hound is often lucky.' *Bíonn cú mhall sona*. Fearfeasa Ó'n Cháinte quotes this in one of his poems (23 L 17, fo. 103a):

Bidh cú m[h]all, a mhic Eóghain,
do réir iúil gach fhíreólaigh,
go mbí a gníomh dá chora i gcruth,
sona, más fíor, le fiadhuch.

Scottish has not preserved the proverb, but it possesses several equivalents, e.g. *Is minic a bha rath air mallthriallach*, 'Often has luck attended a slow traveller'; *Ruigidh each mall muileann*, 'A slow horse will reach the mill; *Ruigidh dàil doras*, 'Delay will reach the door.' The last is also found in Manx: *Roshee daill y dorrys* (Cregeen).

37. Cad do dhéanfadh mac an chait acht luch do mharbhadh?

'What would a young cat do but kill a mouse?' "That that comes of a cat will catch mice." "Cat after kind." *Bu dual do mhac a' chait an luch ithe*, Sc. Such proverbs as these doubtless derive ultimately from the well-known fable of Æsop. Compare nos. 12 and 14 above.

38. Mall Dia, agus triallann a ghrása.

'God moves slowly, yet His grace comes.' Compare no. 164 below.

39. As an obair do fachtar an fhoghluim.

'Learning comes through work.' Compare *Múinfidh a ghnó duine*, and the two next proverbs.

40. Gnáthamh na hoibre an t-eólas.

'Knowledge comes through practice.' "Experientia docet." "Practice makes perfect."

41. Gibé olc maith an ealadha, is taithighe néann máighistreacht.

'Be one's trade good or bad, it is experience that makes one an adept at it. "Use maketh mastery" (Heywood). *Is e 'n cleachdadh a ni teòma* ('expert'), Sc. *

42. Is leithide an bualtach satail ann.

'Trampling on dung only spreads it the more.' *Is leothaid an salchar saltrachd ann*, Sc. N.E. has "The mair ye tramp on [dung], it grows the braider." * cf. RC I, 159

43. Minic gur sia théid an bhréag ná an fhírinne.

'Falsehood often goes farther than truth.'

44. Mór í an fhírinne, agus buaidhfe sí.

"Magna est veritas, et prævalebit."

45. Ní hionmhuin le Dia an béal bréagach.

'God loves not a lying tongue.'

*NGP 212 46. Ag duine féin is fearr fhios cá luigheann a bhróg air.

"The wearer best knows where the shoe pinches him."

47. Allus a mhaoile féin do loisgeann gach éinne.

'The sweat of one's own brow is what burns everyone,' *i.e.* Everyone feels his own trouble
* most. Cf. *A sgéal féin sgéal gach éinne. Is i a chneadh fhéin a ghearaineas gach duine*, 'Everyone complains of his own hurt,' Sc. *'Sí a chneadh féin is luaithe mhothaigheas gach duine*, Uls.

48. Fuacht na slinneán do bhreacann na loirgne.

'Cold in the shoulders makes the shins speckled,' *i.e.* through warming oneself at the fire.

49. Deineann codla fada tóin leis ag duine.

'Long sleep makes a bare breech,' *i.e.* Lying a-bed late makes one poor and ragged. Var. *Do-ní codladh fada tón lom*, Uls.

50. Ní thig éag gan adhbhar.

'Death does not come without a cause.' Cf. *Ní bhíonn trúig gan adhbhar*, 'There is no occurrence without a cause,' W. Cork ('Seandún'). *Cha tig am bàs gun leisgeul*, Sc. *Cha daink rieau yn baase gyn lestal*, Manx (Cregeen).

51. Ní lugha an fhroig ná máthair an uilc.

'Evil may spring from the tiniest thing.' *Froig*, usually *frig* (*frigh*), lit. 'flesh-worm.' Varr. *Is beag í máthair an uilc*, Galway. *Is lugha ioná frighde máthair na hurchóide*, Conn. *Is lugha na frìde màthair a' chonnsachaidh*, Sc. "The mother of mischief is no bigger than a midge's wing" (given by Nicolson as an Eng. proverb). Compare *Is beag an ní dá dtigeann an t-olc* in 'Comhairle Choluimchille' (O'Daly's Ir. Lang. Misc., p. 78). *Bec aní trina tic olc* in a Mid. Ir. poem, ZCP. vi. 272.

52. Bíonn an fhírinne féin searbh.

'Even truth may be bitter.' Tadhg mac Dáire seems to allude to this proverb in the 'Contention of the Bards' in the line *fírinne bhus searbh ré rádh* (I.T.S. xx. 28). A Waterford form is *Bíonn an fhírinne searbh, arsa Cloch Labhrais ag preabadh*, 'Cloch Labhrais' (*i.e.* speaking-stone?) being the name of a huge boulder which lies near Stradbally, and which is cleft in a remarkable manner. Local tradition accounts for the fissure by relating that the

boulder burst asunder on a certain occasion on which a falsehood was uttered upon it.

53. Fearr áirighthe ná srathrach ná iasacht na hiallaite.

'Better the certainty of a straddle (*i.e.* a pack-saddle) than the mere loan of a saddle.' "A bird in the hand is worth two on the bush."

* Cf. the Irish versions of the latter proverb: *Is fearr éan sa dorn ná dhá éan ar an gcraoibh*, and *Is fearr dreóilín i ndorn ná corr ar cáirde*, which latter version will be found "translated" into English in Ó Neachtain's Stair É. Uí Chléire, l. 1928.

54. Dlighe na hiasachta an t-iarrach do bheith briste.

Variously explained as 'The law of borrowing is to break the borrower,' or 'to break the thing borrowed.' For Ó Longáin's *do bheith briste* other versions have *do bhriseadh*. Canon O'Leary's form of the proverb is a slightly abbreviated one, viz.: *Dlighe na hiasachta í bhriseadh*, which he translates: 'The law of borrowing is to break what is borrowed.'

55. Fearr mac le himirt féin ná mac le hól.

'Better even a son given to gambling than a son given to drink.'

56. Súil le cúiteamh do lomann an cearbhach.

'The expectation of recouping himself is what beggars the gambler.' Var. *Súil le breith a chailleann an cearbhach*, 'The hope of winning proves the gambler's undoing.'

57. Fearr teithe maith ná droichsheasamh.

'A good retreat is better than a poor defence.' Var. *rith* (for *teithe*). This is quoted by Keating, though he does not expressly allude to it as a proverb: *Bíodh a fhios aige gurab fearr teitheadh maith ionú droich-sheasamh*, TBg. p. 293. The older form was *Ferr teiched tairisium*, 'Better to flee than to stand still,' which is attributed to Flann Fína (Anecd. iii. 18) and to Fíthal (ed. Thurneysen, p. 14). In this form it is introduced by Roibeard Mac Artúir into the 'Contention of the Bards': *Do gheabhthá id sheinleabhraibh féin* [*seanfhocal gnáthach ar sean*: | *Is fearr teicheamh tairiseamh* (cf. I.T.S. xx. 152). The Scottish form is *Is fhearr teicheadh math na droch fhuireach*.

58. Dall súil i gcúil dhuine eile.

'An eye is blind in another man's corner,' *i.e.* One feels strange among strangers; one does not know one's way about in a strange place, or when attempting unfamiliar work. See no. 330.

59. Géire súil sa chúinne ná dhá shúil ar fuid an tighe.

'One eye in the corner is keener than two eyes about the house.' Var. *Is géire súil sa chúil ná dhá shúil sa tsolas* (GJ. 60, p. 84).

60. Beag sochar na sír-mheisge.

'Little profit comes from constant drunkenness.'

61. Maol guala gan bhráthair,
's is mairg do bhíonn gan dearbhráthair.

'Bare is the shoulder that has no kinsman near,
And woe to him who lacks a brother dear.'

For the full quatrain see Dánfhocail, 227. In a poem attributed to Gormlaith the line occurs: *Maol guala ag nach bí bráthair*, Meyer Misc. p. 354. The Four Masters quote *Maol guala gan bráthair*, s. a. 1583 (p. 1804). It may be noted that in Canon O'Leary's version *is maol guala* is corrupted to *is maol-dhualga* (Aesop i. 37). The proverb is also well known in Scottish. Nicolson quotes a precisely similar saying (borrowed from Irish?) from the Norse Saga of Burnt Njal: "Berr er hverr á baki, nema ser bródhur eigi," 'Bare is one's back unless he have a brother.' Compare the next proverb.

62. Mairg do bhíonn i dtír gan duine aige féin.

'Woe to him who is in a country where there is none to take his part.' Var. *Is mairg do bhíonn san tír ná haitheantar é*, 'where he is not known.' Sometimes with the rhyming addition: *Mar lá na bruighne luigheann an bata ar a thaobh*, 'for on the day of the fight the cudgel is applied to his side.' Cf. "Vae soli, quia cum ceciderit non habet sublevantem se," Eccl. iv. 10.

63. Ní gnáthach caonnach ar an gcloich bhíonn a' síor-chorruighe.

"A rolling stone gathers no moss." Varr. *Ní thagann caonnach ar chloich reatha. Ní chnósuigheann cloch reatha cúnlach*, W. Cork. *Ní bhailigheann an chloch reatha cúnach*, Clare. Begly (p. 473b) has *Ní ghabhann cloch reatha caonnach.* There are numerous versions both in Irish and in Scottish, as often happens in the case of proverbs (like the present) which are not of native origin but comparatively late borrowings.

64. I gcosaibh na con do bhíonn a cuid.

'A greyhound finds its food in its feet,' *i.e.* by using its feet. See Dánfhocail, 223. Cf. *Ní fhaghann cos 'na comhnaidhe dada*, 'A foot that stirs not gets nothing,' Galway.

65. Ná bris reacht is ná déin reacht.

'Neither break a law nor make one.' Cf. Pope's "Be not the first by whom the new is tried," etc. Varr. *Ná din nós agus ná bris nós. Ná tóig deas* (=geas) *agus ná bris deas*, Galway.

66. Is gnáthach an rud is giorra don chroidhe gurb é is giorra don bhéal.

'What is nearest the heart is, as a rule, nearest the lips.' "What the heart thinks, the tongue speaks." "Ex abundantia cordis os loquitur," Matt. xii. 34.

67. Adeir siad go gcanann meisge nó fearg fíor.

'Drunkenness and anger, it is said, speak truly.' Var. *Canann meisge fíor.* Cf. *Ní cheileann meisge rún*, 'Drunkenness reveals secrets.' "In vino veritas." "Nullum secretum est ubi regnat ebrietas," Prov. xxxi. 4. Triads of Ireland, 204.

68. Bean ar meisge, bean i n-aisge.

'A drunken woman is lost to shame.'

69. Adeir siad go bhfaghann badhb a hathchuinghe, is nách ar mhaithe lé é.

'A shrew, they say, gets her wish but suffers in the getting.' The Scottish form is *Gheabh baobh a guidhe, ged nach fhaigh a h-anam tròcair*, 'A shrew will get her wish though her soul will not get mercy.'

70. Cuimhnig, dá gcaillfeá do chuid don tsaoghal, do chreideamhain do choimeád; gidh eadh, má chailleann tú í sin, ní fiú nád tu.

'Be mindful, even though you lose all your wealth, still to keep your good name; for if you lose that, you are worthless.' This reminds one of Shakespeare's "Who steals my purse, steals trash," etc. But it is hardly a 'proverb.' Its origin is probably Prov. xxii.1.

71. Fearr focal sa chúirt ná bonn sa sparán.

'A good word at court is better than a coin in one's purse.' "A friend in court is worth a penny in one's purse." Varr. *púnt* (for *bonn*); *cara* (for *focal*).

Sc. 'S fearr caraid 's a' chùirt na crùn 's an sporan. *

72. Maith í an charaid, acht gé holc bheíth 'na heasba.

'Friendship is good, though absence from friends is painful.'

73. An rud is eagal liom a rádh liom, bíodh a thúis agam féin.

'What I am afraid may be said to me I had better say first myself.'

74. Pé dá n-oireann an caipín do, tógann.

'Whoever the cap fits takes it.' Varr. *An té a dtagann an caipín do, caitheadh sé é*, 'Let him whom the cap suits wear it.' *Mara n-oireann an caipín duit, ná caith é.*

75. Mairg do báitear am an anfa ;
tigeann an ghrian i ndiaidh na fearthana.

'Pity the man who is drowned during the tempest, for after rain comes sunshine.' Much the same idea is expressed in Archbishop Maolmhuire O Huiginn's lines: *Fogus lá don ré dhoirche* (*i.e.* "The darkest hour is nearest dawn") and *Tar éis dubhaidh tig soineann* ('After gloom comes fair weather'). The Archbishop's contemporary, Eochaidh Ó Heoghusa, has a very similar line: *Teas gréine is gar do dhubhadh*, 'Sunshine follows gloom' (Ir. Monthly, 1920, p. 543). The same looking forward to brighter days is seen a few years later in a poem by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird (ibid. p. 52): *Tig teas iomarcach d' éis reéidh,* | *glanaidh grian i ndiaidh duibh-neóil*, 'After frost comes great heat, after a dark cloud comes sunshine'; and again *An bláth chuireas an choill di,* | *tig a ionshamhail uirthi*, 'The wood will renew the foliage it sheds.' (Compare with this Dánfhocail 45).

In English also there are a number of such proverbs, *e.g.* "After clouds black we shall have weather clear" (Heywood); "After rain comes fair weather"; "After a storm comes a calm." See also Skeat 154. A Mid. Eng. proverb of similar import, "When the bale is hest, thenne is the bote nest" (Skeat 83), has a close parallel in the Mod. Ir. *Nuair is mó an anochain iseadh is giorra an chabhair*, 'When misfortune is greatest, then is relief nearest.' An old Welsh proverb may also be quoted here: *Dybyd hinon*

gwedy glaw, 'There will be fair weather after rain' (Skene, Four Ancient Books of Wales, ii. 305).

76. Ceileann súil an ní ná faiceann.

'The eye shuns (*lit.* hides) what it does not see,' *i.e.* "Out of sight out of mind." The literary form is *Seachnaidh súil ní ná faiceann*, Dánta Grádha, p. 14;Ériu v. p. 136. The proverb is still current in Waterford, the first word there being *seachtnuigheann* (Sheehan, Cnó C.C., 31) or *cosnuigheann* (S. Ó Cadhla, Eachtra na mBróg, 6). Cf. *Mian mhic a shúil*, 'What is seen is desired.' *Nuair a dhirdeann* (=dhruideann) *an radharc ón súil, dirdeann an grádh ón gcroidhe*, 'When the view leaves the eye, love leaves the heart.' *An té ná ficid ní thitfid i ngrádh leis*, 'They won't fall in love with a man they don't see.' (These two last proverbs have been heard in Ballingeary, W. Cork). *An ní nach bhfeiceann súil, ní bhrónann croidhe*, Conn., "What the eye sees not the heart rues not." It may be worth noting that Tadhg Ó Neachtain uses *Os* (=as) *amharc, os cuimhne* (Gadelica i. 160), a literal translation of the English "Out of sight, out of mind." Compare also the old Welsh proverb *Gwall arny mynych welir*, 'What is not often seen is neglected' (Skene, ii. 308), and the Eng. "Seldom seen, soon forgotten."

77. Bíonn cluasa ar na clathacha.

'Fences have ears.' Var. *Labhair go socair, bíonn cluasa ag ballaí*, Conn. "Walls have

ears." Cf. *Ná leig do rún le cloidhe*, 'Tell not your secret even to a fence,' Conn., Uls.

78. Ceileann searc ainimh is locht.

'Love is blind to (*lit.* hides) blemishes and faults.' Cf. *Bíonn an grádh caoch*, "Love is blind." *Faluigheann grádh gráin, agus chí fuath a lán*, Uls. Scottish has *Cha'n fhaic gràdh lochd* ("Love sees no faults"), *Ceilidh seirc aineamh*, and *Ceilidh gràdh gràin*. The literary parent of the two latter and of O'Longan's proverb is *Celid serc ainble 7 olc*, 'Love hides ignominy and evil,' found in the Book of Leinster (147 b 41). Cf. *Ní breitheamh comhthrom an grádh*, 'Love is not an impartial judge,' quoted as a *seanfhocal* in an anonymous poem of A.D. 1559 (H. 5. 28, fo. 160b). Some of these proverbs probably have a biblical origin; cf. Prov. x. 12, and i. Pet. iv. 8.

79. Uireasba ní cumha.

'Want (*i.e.* poverty) makes sadness.' Var. *Bochtaineacht níos cumha*, Clare and S. Conn. Cf. "There is no woe to want" (Camden).

80. I ndiaidh an tsochair do bhíonn an grádh.

'Love pursues profit,' *i.e.* Self-interest comes first, love afterwards, as in marriages for money. Var. *I ndiaidh an tairbhe bhíonn an grádh*, which occurs in Comhairle na Barrsgolóige. Compare also the next proverb.

81. Mo ghrádh thu, a rud agat.

'I love you—what you have!'

82. Bíodh rud agat féin, nó bí in éamuis.

'Have a thing yourself, or else do without it'

83. Is ait leis na daoine dealbha an bhláthach.

'Needy folks are pleased with buttermilk.' "Poor folks are glad of pottage." Var. *Is maith leis na mná dealbha an bhláthach.* Cf. *An té ná faghann an fheóil is mór an sógh leis an t-anairthe,* 'He who does not get meat thinks soup a great luxury.' "He that never eats flesh thinks harigalds a feast," N.E. Cf. "Beggars can't be choosers," and no. 4 above.

84. Múchadh feirge soifhreagra.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath" (Prov. xv. 1).

85. Níor bhris deaghfhocal béal éinne riamh.

'A kind word never broke anyone's mouth.' Var. *Níor bhris focal maith fiacail riamh.* Cf. "Soft words break no bones."

86. Gé ná bíonn aon chnámh sa teangain, is minic do bhris sí ceann duine.

'Though there is no bone in the tongue, it has often broken a person's head.' Similar proverbs were formerly common in medieval Latin and English. Heywood has "Tongue breaketh bone, and bone itself hath none"; for earlier instances see Skeat 79. Their origin is biblical; cf. "Plaga linguæ comminuet ossa," Eccli. xxviii. 21, and "Lingua mollis confringet duritiam," Prov. xxv. 15. An Irish version of the latter appears in the Irish adaptation of Cambrensis: *Tescaid in tenga boc in cnáim crúaidh*, Eng. Hist. Rev., 1905, p. 88.
* A Scottish proverb is very similar: *Bristidh an teanga bhog an cnàimh*. Compare no. 122.

87. Ná nocht t'fhiacla go bhféadfair an greim do bhreith.

'Do not show your teeth until you can bite.' "If you cannot bite, never show your teeth."

* NGP 323 88. Ná caith an t-uisge salach féin amach nó go mbeidh an t-uisge glan istig.

'Don't throw out even dirty water until you have the clean water in.' "Cast not out the auld water till the new come in," N.E.

89. Ní coidreamh go héintigheas.

'To know a person one must live in the same house with him.' Var. *Ní haitheantas go héintigheas.*

90. I n-ithe na potóige bhíonn a tástáil.

"The proof of the pudding lies in the eating of it."

91. Más le bheith ceirteach dhuit, bí cruinnecheirteach.

'If you must be in rags, let your rags be tidy.'

92. Ní thigeann ciall roimh aois.

'Good sense comes only with age.'

93. Is don ghlóire an ghluine.

'Cleanliness is part of glory,' *i.e.* "Cleanliness is next to godliness."

94. Maith an mustárd an sliabh.

'The mountain is a good mustard,' *i.e.* Work or exercise on the mountain is a good appetiser. Var. *Is maith an vinéigre an sliabh.* Cf. *Is maith an t-annlann an t-ocras.* "Hunger is the best sauce." "Optimum cibi condimentum fames" (Cicero).

95. Dána gach fear go tulaig.

'Every man is bold until he is at a public assembly.' The time-honoured Irish custom (which prevailed down to the Elizabethan conquest) was to hold public assemblies on suitable hills; hence the secondary meaning (here illus-

trated) of *tulach*, 'hill.' Conversely *aonach*, 'an assembly' (in Irish now 'a fair'), has in Scottish come to mean 'a hill, a heath.'

96. Mairg bheir rogha dhá chómharsain.

'Woe to him who gives his neighbour a choice,' or perhaps 'who gives a preference to one neighbour over another.' The proper word here, however, seems to be not *rogha* but the homophone *rabhadh*, 'warning,' when the meaning is 'Woe to him whose example is a warning to his neighbour.' It is thus I have heard the proverb interpreted in Ballyvourney (W. Cork), where the local forms are *Is mairg a thugas rou* (=rabhadh) *dhá chómharsain*, and *Is mairg a thugann ciall cheannaig dá chómharsain.*

97. Baist do leanbh féin ar dtúis.

'Baptise your own child first,' *i.e.* Attend to your own affairs first (before troubling about other people's). Var. *Isé a leanbh féin a bhaisteas an sagart i dtosach* (or *ar dtús*); 'The priest baptises his own child first,' Conn., Uls. According to MacAdam this form of the proverb is "often said as a kind of excuse for serving one's self first." Scottish is similar: *Is e 'leanabh fhéin a's luaithe 'bhaisteas an sagart.* A Kilkenny account of the origin of the proverb *Baisteann an sagart a pháiste féin ar dtúis* will be found in 'Fáinne an Lae,' 12 Aug. 1899, pp. 42-43. A similar Tipperary account

of the origin of the version current in local English, "The priest christens his own child first," is given in Journal R.S.A.I., xix. (1889-90), p. 137. These tell the legend of a poor man who was once presented by his wife with seven sons at one birth, with the result that he determined to drown them in the neighbouring river. While on his way thither he is dissuaded from his unnatural act by a priest whom he meets (or by an angel in disguise, who conducts him to a priest). The priest adopts one of the children, after getting six other priests to do likewise; and he then proceeds to baptise them, beginning with the child he himself had adopted. The story goes on to tell how the seven sons eventually became seven bishops, who were martyred, and were buried together in the churchyard of 'Freamstown' (or 'Áth Einne') in Co. Kilkenny.

98. Glas an rud an foghmhar.

'Harvest is green.' The meaning is probably 'Don't praise prematurely; wait until you are justified by the event,' like the proverb *Mol gort agus ná mol geamhar*,' 'Praise the ripe field, not the green corn.'

99. Glac an rud do gheobhair.

'Take what you get.' Var. *Glac a bhfuighir, agus díol a bhféadfair*, 'Take what you get, and pay what you can.'

100. Fearr déanaighe ná ró-dhéanaighe.

"Better late than never" (lit. 'than too

late'). Varr. *Is fearr mall ná choidhche*, Clare. *Is fearr go deireannach ná go bráth*, Raftery, p. 360. *Is fearr mall ná go bráth*, Uls.

101. Ní fearr a rádh ná cuimhneamh air.

'To think of it is as good as to mention it,' *i.e.* Better think of it without saying anything about it.

102. Ní théid dlighe sa bhuille ná buailtear.

'A blow that is not struck is not actionable
* at law.' *Cho dteid euraic as a bhuille nach buailtior*, Edinb. MS.

103. Ní théid urraim tar dhortadh fola.

'Reverence ceases once blood is spilt.' This appears to be an old judicial maxim. Thus in many versions of Bruidhean Bheag na hAlmhaine when King Cormac says 'Every warrior owes homage to his lord' (*Dlighidh gach óglaoch urraim dá thighearna*), his jurist, Flaithrí, counters him by quoting the above saying. In another version of this tale Flaithrí's reply is as follows: *Is fíor sin isin mbánbhualad, ocus ní hedh i ndortad na fola*, 'That holds good for a bloodless combat, but not for one in which blood is shed' (Silva Gad., i. 342). Cormac's remark, quoted above, was evidently another ancient maxim; a variant of it occurs among the proverbs in the Edinb.

MS., viz. *Umhal da thighearna dhligheas gach oglach.* ✶

104. Níl tuile ná trághann.

"Every tide has its ebb." Cf. *Chan 'eil tuil air nach tig traoghadh*, Sc. The proverb is sometimes added to thus: *Níl tuile ná trághann ach tuile na ngrást*, 'Every flood has an ebb save the flood of God's grace.' With this cf. the Sc. proverb *Chan eil math nach teirig ach math Dhé*, 'All good has an end save the goodness of God.' Cf. *Níl tuile dhá mhéad nach dtráigheann*, in a Galway song (Amhráin Chl. Gaedheal, p. 142). So Manx *Lurg roayrt hig contraie* (Cregeen), 'The spring-tide is followed by the neap'; and Welsh *Po mwyaf fo'r llanw, mwyaf fydd y trai*, 'The greater the tide, the greater the ebb.' ✶ ✶

Versions of this proverb are of frequent occurrence in the literature. Thus, in the Book of Leinster (147b 42): *Noco bí tuile cen tart*, 'There is no flood without a (corresponding) drought.' So in a dialogue in verse between Fíthal and Cormac: *Bíd contracht for muir mór, bíd ítu ar n-ól, a Fhíthail*, 'The great sea (*i.e.* flood-tide?) has its ebb; drinking is followed by thirst, Fíthal' (LL. 149a 27; also Hib. Min. p. 83). *Is tearc tuile nach téid as*, in a poem by Donnch. Mór Ó Dálaigh (Timth. vii. 61). *Ní bhí tuile nach téid as*, in a poem by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh (ibid. 48) *Ní gnáth tuile nach dtig tráigh*, Dánta Grádha, p. 36. Cf. *Tuile gan tráigh maith Mhuire* and *Tuile gan trágh daonnacht Dé*, first lines of

poems by Aonghus Fionn (ed. McKenna, pp. 15, 32).

105. Dá fhaid lá, tigeann oidhche.

*qNGP 195. "The longest day has an end."

106. Ní sheasuigheann rith d'each maith i gcomhnuidhe.

*qNGP 104 '(Even) a good horse cannot keep running always.' Varr. *Ní sheasuigheann rith maith don each i gcomhnuidhe. Ní mhaireann* etc., Galway.

107. Nuair is cruaidh don chailligh, caithfe sí rith.

'When the old woman is hard pressed she must needs run.' "Need makes the old wife trot."

108. Bé théid as nó ná téid, ní théid fear na headaragála.

*NGP 65, 172. 'No matter who comes off well, the peace-maker is sure to come off ill.' Often shortly: *Ní théidheann fear na headargála* (or *fear an eadargáin*) *as.* Cf. *Is minig a fhuair fear na h-eadraiginn buille*, Sc. Compare Triads of Ireland, 135.

109. Ní gnáth fear náireach éadálach.

'A shamefaced man seldom acquires wealth.'

"He that spares to speak spares to speed." Cf. *Ní fhaghann sagart balbh beatha*, 'A dumb priest does not get a livelihood. "Dumb folks get no lands."

110. Ní dheaghaidh fear meata chun baintighearnan. cf. NGP 86.

"Faint heart never won fair lady." "None but the brave deserve the fair." Cf. *Níor chaill fear an mhisnig riamh é*, 'A brave man gets his reward.'

111. Ní fuláir deachmhadh na sláinte dhíol.

'One must pay health its tithes,' *i.e.* by suffering little illnesses from time to time.

112. Is milis an rud an t-anam.

"Life is sweet." Also with a humorous addition thus: *Is luachmhar an t-anam, mar adubhairt an táilliúir agus é ag rith ó'n nganndal*, 'Life is precious, as the tailor said when running from the gander.' Cf. *Is bàidheil duine ris an anam*, Sc. *

113. Is mó croiceann chuireann an óige dhi.

'Youth often sheds its skin,' *i.e.* Youth is extravagant, but its extravagances do not last. Cf. no. 92, and also: *Bíonn an óige ar buile, Bíonn ceann caol ar an óige.*

114. Is minic bhí braimín gioblach 'na ghillín chumasach.

'Often has a tattered colt grown to be a splendid horse.' "A ragged colt may make a good horse." Var. *Is minic do dhin searraichín gioblach each breágh cumasach.* Cf. *Braimichín gioblach nú garsúinín breac-loirgneach*, 'A tattered colt and a lad fond of roasting his shins at the fire (often turn out well),' Clare. Cf. *Na toir breith chabhagach air mac luideagach no air loth pheallagaich*, 'Don't judge hastily of a ragged boy or a shaggy colt,' Sc.

115. Ní fios cia is túisge croiceann na seanachaereach nó na caereach óige ar an bhfroig.

'One cannot tell whether the skin of the old sheep or that of the young sheep will be the sooner suspended on the rafter,' *i.e.* one cannot say which of them will meet its end first. English has "As soon goes the young lamb's skin to the market as the old ewe's." Begly (p. 672b) translates this as follows: *Ní luaithe croicionn na seanchaorach ar an margadh ioná croicionn an uain.* So *Ní luaithe craiceann na seanchaorach ar an aonach ná craiceann na caorach óige*, Uls.

116. Tar éis a chítear gach beart.

'It is afterwards events are understood.' Var. *Tar éis iseadh tuigtear gach beart.* Cf. *Mo bheart is dá héis do-chím*, Dánta Gr. p. 36.

117. Mór-thaidhbhseach iad adharca na mbó tar lear.

'Far off cows have long horns,' *i.e.* "Distance lends enchantment to the view" (Campbell). "Omne ignotum pro magnifico" (Tacitus). Var. *Bionn adharca muara ar na buaibh thar lear. Bidh adhaircean fada air a' chrodh tha fada uainn* (or *air a' chrodh tha 'n Eirinn*), &c. Cf. also *Is glas iad na cnuic i bhfad uainn*, 'Distant hills are green.' The proverb is paraphrased by Pádraigín Haicéad (ed. Torna, p. 107): *'Sé soin gur sia gach adharc | ar bhoin is sia ó'r síorradharc.* It also occurs in Comhairlè na Bárrsgolóige: *Is gnáthach taidhbhseach adharca na mbó thar lear.*

118. Ferr beagán don ghaol ná morán don aitheantas.

'Better a little relationship than much acquaintance." Cf. "Blood is thicker than water," which has been borrowed into Northern Irish (*Is tibhe fuil na uisge*, MacAdam) and into Scottish. MacAdam quotes a Spanish proverb "Mas vale onza de sangre que libra de amistad," 'Better an ounce of blood than a pound of friendship.'

119. Mairg ná deineann cómhairle deaghmhná.

'Woe to him who does not the counsel of a good wife.' In the 'Pursuit of Diarmuid and

Gráinne' these words are uttered by Diarmuid in self-reproach (Oss. Soc. iii. p. 182).

* NgP 22

120. An té ná gabhann cómhairle gabhadh sé cómhrac.

'Let him who will not have advice have conflict,' *i.e.* such a man will create trouble for himself. "He that will not be counselled cannot be helped."

121. Minic bhí duine 'na dhroch-chómhairlidhe dho féin agus 'na chómhairlidhe mhaith do dhuine eile.

'A man is often a bad adviser to himself and a good adviser to another.' Varr. *An té ná bíonn 'na chomhairleóir mhaith dha féin, is minic a thugann sé comhairle mhaith do dhaoine eile. An té a bhíonn 'na sheirbhíseach mhaith do dhaoine eile, is minic a bhíonn sé 'na dhroch-shcirbhíseach do féin.* These resemble: *Ná din mar dhéanfa siad, ach din mar déarfa siad*, 'Do as they say, not as they do,' said of the clergy, and based on Matt. xxiii. 3. Cf. *Dénaidh in ní aderait 7 ná dénaidh in ní do nít* in the 15th cent. 'Riaghail na Sacart,' Irisl. Muighe Nuadhad, 1919, p. 75.

* NgP 325

122. Ná gearradh do theanga do sgórnach.

'Let not your tongue cut your throat,' *i.e.* Beware of injuring yourself by foolish speech.

Cf. "A fool's tongue is long enough to cut his own throat," and no. 86.

123. Ní bhfaghann sír-iarraidh ach sír-eiteach.

Constant begging only meets with constant refusal.'

124. Ní bhfaghann dorn dúnta ach lámh iadhta.

'A shut fist gets only a closed hand,' *i.e.* Niggardliness begets niggardliness, hostility provokes hostility. This occurs in Comhairle na Bárrsgolóige: *Mar ná faghann lámh iadhta ach dorn dúnta.* It is also found in Begly's Dictionary (1732, p. 380a): *Ní fhághann an lámh iadhta acht dornn dúinte.* See no. 314.

125. Tabhair-se sin damhsa, is bí féin it óinsig.

'Give that to me, and be a fool yourself.' Said of a request which is thought unreasonable.

126. Ní théid cómhar na gcómharsan le chéile.

'Mutual help in farming does not always coincide,' *i.e.* (probably) some profit more by it than others. A Galway variant is the direct opposite: *Tagann cómhar na gcómharsan le chéile.*

127. Adeir siad ná deaghaidh fial go hiofrann.

'A generous man, they say, has never gone to hell.' Cf. *Go dtéidh grian go grinneall, ní raghaidh fial go hifreann*, Galway.

128. Is bádhach lucht éinchine.

'People of the same stock are friendly.' Varr. *báigeamhail* or *bádhmhar* (for *bádhach*); *éinchéirde*, 'of the same trade' (for *éinchine*). Begly (p. 212a) gives *Is bádhach lucht aoinchéirde* as the equivalent of "Birds of a feather flock together." Compare the Welsh *Brodyr pob cerddorion*, now understood as 'Musicians are brothers,' but doubtless handed down from the time when *cerddorion* would have meant (cf. Irish *ceard*, *ccardaidhe*) 'craftsmen' in general.

129. Nuair bhíonn do lámh i mbéal an mhadra, tarraing go réig í.

'When your hand is in the dog's mouth withdraw it gently,' *i.e.* Act cautiously when you are at the mercy of another.

130. Ní thuigeann an sáthach an seang, nuair bhíonn a bholg féin teann.

'The man whose stomach is well filled has little sympathy with the wants of the hungry.' Var. *Níor thuig an sáthach sámh an t-ocrach riamh. Cha tuig an sàthach an seang*, Sc. *Cha dennee rieau yn soogh y shang*, Manx (Cregeen).

131. Iongnadh fear aitheanta na locht do bheith go holc uim an mbia.

'Tis strange that one who is so quick at discovering faults should himself be so stingy about food.' For *locht* the MS. has *lucht*.

132. Teangmhann na daoine ar a chéile, is ní theangmhaid na cnuic ná na sléibhte.

"Men may meet, but mountains never greet." Varr. *castar* (for *teangmhann* and *teangmhaid*); *le chéile* (for *ar a chéile*). In Seán Ó Neachtain's 'Stair Éamuinn Uí Chléire' (l. 1207) this proverb occurs as: *Castar na daoine ar a chéile agus ní castar na cnuic*. Cf. also Begly, p. 238a.

W. cynt y cwrdd dau ddyn na dau fynydd.

133. Ní gnáth cosnamh iar ndíth tighearna.

'Rarely is a fight continued when the chief has fallen.' A maxim which is found in our romantic literature (e.g. *Ní gnáth cathughadh iar ndíth tighearna*, Br. Chaor. 5, C. R. Ríogh 104), and which explains how the issue of many a battle in ancient days was decided. Compare *mar nach gnáth cosnamh tar éis tighearnaidhe do thuitim* in Tór. Dhiarmuda agus Ghráinne (Oss. Soc. iii. 104). So Ó Cléirigh in his Life of Aodh Ruadh, speaking of the death of Bagnal at the Yellow Ford in 1598, says that the English thereupon took to flight, 'as usually happens when an army's commander and general is cut off' (*amhail as gnāithbhés*

don tslógh fria n-eatarscarthar a n-aireach catha 7 a ccenn costadha 7 comhairle, p. 172).

*NGP 220

134. Is buaine bladh ná saoghal.

'Fame endures longer than life.' An exhortation to brave deeds, frequently found in our romantic literature (*e.g.* Bran, p. 63; Fianaigecht, p. 94; Duan. Finn, p. 13). Var. *clú* (for the older and obsolete *bladh*). Very similar is Cúchulainn's fine sentiment: *Beó duine d' éis a anma, agus ní beó d' éis a oinigh*, 'A man may live after losing his life, but not after losing his honour,' Foghlaim Chonculainn (see *infra* no. 276). In the same spirit Cúchulainn, having heard one day the druid Cathbha prophesy that whatever youth assumed arms on that day would be at once famous for his deeds and short-lived, deliberately chose that day for his first 'taking of arms.' "Highly shall I value it," he said, "though my life last but one day and one night, if only the fame of my exploits lives after me" (*Amra bríg, can co rabur acht oenlá 7 oenadaig ar bith, acht co marat m'airscéla 7 m' imthechta di mm' ési.* Cf. TBC., ed. Windisch, l. 1111). Again, shortly before his death, Cúchulainn more than once justifies his ardour for battle by quoting the above saying, *Is buaine bladh ná saoghal* (Brisleach Mhór M.M., ed. Lloyd, pp. 16, 38).

So in Caithréim Conghail Chláiringnigh it is said of a warrior: *ba cuma les bás d' fhagháil acht go mairi[o]dh a bhladh do bhunadh*, 'he recked not of death, if only his fame lived always' (I.T.S. v. 94). And the author of the

Irish adaptation of Vergil's Aeneid makes the Latins and the Trojans fight, like the heroes of our native literature, regardless of their lives and seeking only the perpetuation of the fame of their brave deeds (*Ní tard nech díb grádh dia anmain ac cuindchid allaidh 7 oirdhercuis anma dia éis;* cf. I.T.S. vi. 2820).

It is remarkable that Welsh possesses an exact equivalent of the Irish proverb, viz., *Hwy clôd nâ hoedl,* 'Fame is longer than life,' which is found in print (in Davies' Dictionary) as early as 1632.

135. Ní cortar fear na héadála.

'The money-maker (or "profiteer") is never tired.'

136. Ní bhíonn saoi gan locht, is bíonn dá locht i n-aon tsaoi.

cf NGP 116

'A good man is not faultless, and there are two faults in one good man.' Var. *Ní fachtar saoi gan locht*, in Comhairle na Bárrsgolóige. Compare *Tuislean saoith*, 'A good man may stumble' (Hardiman). "Nemo sine defectu," Imitatio Christi (i. 16), which in O'Sullivan's translation (1822) is rendered *Ní bhfuil saoi gan locht.* "Every man has his faults."

137. Beirbh birín dam is beireód birín duit.

"Scratch my back and I'll scratch yours," lit. 'Cook a *birín* (little spit) for me, and I'll

cook one for you.' Var. *bruith* and *bruithfe mé*, Galway.

138. Cuimnibh an cnámh is leanfaidh an madra thu.

'Keep hold of the bone and the dog will follow you.'

Cf. Measgra Dánta 74, l. 15.

139. Ní dheaghaidh rogha ó réiteach.

'Nothing is preferable to reconciliation.' 'It is best to settle disputes amicably.' Var. *Ní théidheann rogha ón réiteach.*

140. Níor cheannuig éinne riamh an tsíocháin ach an té ná fuair í.

'No one has ever bought peace save the man who has not got it,' *i.e.* No one has paid (suffered) so much for peace as the man who is without it. Var. *Ní cheannuigheann éinne an suaimhneas ach an té ná faghann é.* Cf. *Is fiú an suaimhneas é cheannach*, 'Quietness is worth buying.'

141. Beag an mhaith an mhaith do maoidhtear,
is ní lugha ná an mhaith ná hadmhuighthear.

'The benefit which is boasted of is a sorry one; not less sorry is the benefit which is not acknowledged,' *i.e.* 'It ill becomes one who confers a benefit to boast of it, or one who

receives a benefit to refuse to acknowledge it.' Var. *Is beag an mhaith an mhaith ná hinnstear, 's is measa an mhaith an mhaith do maoidhtear.* Cf. *Is fearr an mhaith a déantar is a maoidhtear ná an mhaith ní déantar agus ná maoidhtear*, i.e. 'Better a good deed which is boasted of than no good deed at all.'

142. Mairg ná cuimhnigheann ar an arán d' íosadh sé.

'Woe to him who remembers not the bread he eats.' Cf. *Ní cuimhnightear ar an arán atá ithte*, "Eaten bread is forgotten."

143. Fearr leath-bhairghean ná bheith gan arán.

"Half a loaf is better than no bread." Cf. *Is fearr leath ná meath*, 'Half (a crop) is better than failure (of the whole). The present proverb must be a fairly late one, but it has two old parallels among the sayings attributed to Flann Fína mac Ossu (see no. 2 *supra*), viz. *Ferr leth lánetech*, 'Half is better than a complete refusal,' and *Ferr beg éra*, 'A little is better than a refusal' (Anecd. iii. pp. 20, 19). The latter is also attributed to Fíthal (ed. Thurneysen, 16).

144. Sábháil an fóghmhar faid do bheidh an ghrian suas.

"Make hay while the sun shines." Cf Begly, p. 229a.

145. Glac an mhuc ar chois nuair gheóbhair.

'Catch the pig by the leg when you can.' Var. *Má bheireann tú ar mhuic, beir ar chois uirthi*, 'If you catch a pig, catch it by the leg,' Clare.

146. Tóg an liathróid ar a' gcéad hop.

"Take the ball at the hop." Var. *Buail an liathróid nuair gheóbha tú ar an hop í.*

147. Uain nó taoide ní fhanaid le haonduine.

"Time and tide wait for no man." Cf. *Ní fhanann tráigh le fear mall*, 'The ebb-tide waits not for a dilatory man,' Conn. *Ní fhanann muir le fear ualaigh*, 'The sea does not wait for a man with a load,' Clare. *Cha'n fhuirich muir ri uallach*, Sc.

148. Deacair geirrfhiadh chur as a' dtor ná beidh sé.

'It is hard to drive a hare out of a bush in which he is not.' Said of attempting an impossibility: cf. the next proverb.

149. Ní buintear fuil as tornap.

"One cannot draw blood from a turnip." Cf. *ag iarraidh olna ar ghabhar*, lit. 'asking a goat for wool,' which is already found in Aislinge Meic Conglinne (cf. ed. Meyer, p. 71)

So in Manx: *goll thie yn ghoayr dy hirrey ollan* (Cregeen), 'going to the goat's house to seek for wool.'

150. Fearr féachain rót ná dhá fhéachain id dhiaig.

'One look before is better than two behind.' "Look before you leap." "Prevention is better than cure." Var. *breathnú* (for *féachain*), Galway. Cf. *Breithnig an abha sar a dtéidhir 'na cuilith*, 'Take stock of the river before you plunge into the current.' In Comhairle na Bárrsgolóige: *Breithnig an abha do réir a cuilithe*. Compare no. 188.

151. Mór cuid drochmhná dá drochbhláthaig féin.

'A bad wife drinks a big share of her own bad buttermilk.' A Sc. variant is *S mór sāith droch bhanaraich da droch bhlāthach fēin*, Edinb. MS. (*banarach* = '*dairymaid*').

152. Ní i gcomhnuidhe mharbhann daidín fia.

'It is not every day daddy kills a deer.' Varr. *Ní i gcomhnuidhe bhíonn Domhnall Buidhe á phósadh*, W. Muns. *Ní hé gach uile am a mharbhuigheas Páidín fiadh*, Galway. *Ní gach aon lá mharbhas bó gearrfhiadh*, and *Chan é gach aon lá a mharbhas Maghnus bológ*, Ulster. The meaning of all these is: 'It is rarely we have an occasion like the present.'

153. Fearr an mhaith atá ná an dá mhaith do bhí.

'Better one good thing that is than two good things that were.' A versified form of this proverb will be found in Dánfhocail, no. 40.

154. Fearr amhail ná dóith.

'Better "it is so" than "it may be so"'

155. Cuir luath is buin luath.

"Early sow, early mow."

cf. NGP 291

156. Minic do mheath dóith is tháinig andóith.

'Often has the likely failed and the unlikely prospered.' Cf. no. 114, and *Is minic deárathach cailleamhnach*, 'What appears full of promise often turns out a failure.'

157. Bíonn an rath i mbun na ronna.

'There is luck in sharing a thing.' Var. *Bíonn an rath i mbun an chaitte*, 'There is luck in spending'; cf. Dánfhocail, 5; Stair
* É. Uí Chléire, l. 748. *Bidh sonas 'an lorg na caithimh*, Sc.

cf. NGP 151

158. Buadhann an fhoighde ar an gcinneamhain.

'Patience conquers destiny.' Var. *an t-imshníomh*, 'anxious foresight' (for *an fhoighde*).

Sáruigheann an fhoighde an chinneamhaint, Galway. Compare nos. 159, 219, 228.

159. Is ceirín do gach uile chréacht an fhoighde.

"Patience is a plaster for all sores."

160. Cíos do thighearna nó biadh do leanbh.

'Rent to a lord is like food to a child.'

161. An rud do thógfadh duine, 'sé mharódh duine eile.

"One man's meat is another man's poison." Var. *An rud a mharódh duine, isé bheathódh duine eile.*

162. An luibh ná fachtar fhóireann, adeir siad.

'The herb that is not got is the one that cures, they say.' Var. *An luibh ná fachtar isí fhóircann.*

163. Túis na heagna uamhan Dé.

'The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom' (cf. Ps. cx. 10, etc.). This is the first line of a poem by Aonghus Ó Dálaigh Fionn (ed. McKenna, p. 50). Cf. in a poem by Tadhg mac Dáire: *Túis gach fhír-eagna is é sin, sír-eagla Dé ar na daoinibh* (cf. Trans. Gaelic Soc., 1808, pt. 3, p. 22).

164. Do mholadh Dé ná bí tuirseach,
bíd a ghrása triall go mall.

'Weary not of praising God; His grace comes [surely, if] slowly.' For the full quatrain see Dánfhocail, 133.

*NGP 199
36

165. Ní sáruighthear na seanfhocail.

'Proverbs cannot be contradicted.' Var. *Ní féidir an seanfhocal do shárú.* Compare Tadhg Dall quoted under no. 200 *infra.*

166. Geal leis an bhfiach ndubh a gheárrcach féin.

'The raven thinks its own chick white (*or* dear).' Cf. *Síleann an préachán gur deise a éan féin ná aon éan eile sa gcoill*, "The crow thinks its own bird the fairest in the wood,"
* Conn. "Suum cuique pulchrum." *Ge dubh am fitheach, is geal leis 'isean*, 'Black as is the raven, he thinks his chick fair,' Sc.

W. gwyn y gwêl y frân ei chyw

167. Ní bhfachtar maith le mugha agus fachtar clú le déirc.

'No good is got by wasting, but a good name is got by alms-giving,' *i.e.* One ought not to waste, but give whatever can be spared as alms

cf. NGP 97

168. Ní dhíolann dearmhad fiacha.

'Forgetting a debt does not pay it.' Cf "Sorrow will pay no debt."

169. Dearbhráthair don bhás an codladh.

'Sleep is brother to Death.' Cf. Shelley's "Death and his brother Sleep." Hardiman has *Iomháigh an bháis codhla*, 'Sleep is the image of Death.'

170. Caithtear gach maith le mionchaitheamh.

'Goods are consumed by being used in small quantities.' Var. *imigheann* (for *caithtear*). *Teirigidh gach ni ri 'chaitheamh*, Sc. *Téid caitheamh i ngach ní*, 'Everything is (sooner or later) consumed.' Tór. Dhiarmuda agus Ghráinne (cf. Oss. Soc. iii. 46). Cf. no. 104, and Dánfhocail 255.

171. Mairg bhíonn go holc is bheadh go bocht 'na dhiaig.

'Pity the man who does evil and who is poor notwithstanding.' Var. *bheadh* omitted. Cf. Dánfhocail, 203:

Is duine dona atá mar táim,
gan an saoghal im láimh ná Dia!

172. Is uiris dearga ar aithinne fhórloisgthe.

'Burning embers are easily kindled,' *i.e.* Old feuds are easily revived. Cf. *Is furus aibhleóg a fhadú*, Uls.

173. Níl cogadh is géire ná cogadh na gcarad, ach ní bhíonn sé buan.

'No war is more bitter than the war of friends, but it does not last long.' Cf. "Amantium irae amoris integratio," Terence. Var. *Is neambuan é cogadh na gcarad; má bhionn sé cruaidh, ní bhionn sé fada.* Often shortly: *Ní buan cogadh na gcarad.*

174. Is caora an t-uan i bhfad.

'A lamb when carried far becomes as burdensome as a sheep.' Varr. *Is caora mhór an t-uan i bhfad. Is trom cearc i bhfad*, 'A hen carried far is heavy.' *Is trom an cat ri 'shìor-ghiùlan*, 'A cat is heavy if carried constantly,' Sc. "Light burden far heavy."

175. Ní abair galar fada bréag.

'A lingering illness does not belie itself,' *i.e.* it ends in death. "Long threatening comes at last." Var. *Galar fada ní abrann síorruidhe bréag.* Cf. *Tinneas fada is éag 'na bhun*, 'A long sickness with death at its close,' Uls. *Galar fada 's éug 'n a bhun*, Sc. There is a very similar Welsh proverb: *Bod yn hir yn glâf a marw eisys*, 'To be long sick and to die nevertheless.'

176. Dá fhaid bhíonn an crúisgín a' dul go nuig an nisge, isé chrích a bhrise.

'However long a pitcher goes to the water, it is broken at last.' Cf. *Isé crích an phoitín*

a thóin a thuitim as. Var. *Dá mhince théidheanns an crúisgín go dtí an tobar, bristear é ar deireadh*, Conn. Also in Eng. in various forms, *e.g.* "Often goes the pitcher (*or* pot) to the well (*or* water), but at last it comes broken home."

177. Iomad don aithne
méaduigheann sé an tarcuisne.

"Too much familiarity breeds contempt." An anonymous love-sick poet thus applies the proverb to himself (23 D 4, p. 383):

Iomarcuigh an aitheantais
tarcuisne orm do mhéaduig.

178. Dána gach madra i ndoras a thighe féin.

'Every dog is valiant at his own door.' "Every cock is proud on his own dunghill." Var. *Is teann gach madra ar úrlár a thighe féin. Is dàna cù air a dhùnan* (dunghill) *fhéin* or *aig a dhorus fhéin*, Sc. Cf. *gal con for otrach sin*, 'that is the valour of a dog on a dunghill' Cath Muigi Rath (Ériu v. 238). ✱

179. Uaisle éisteas le healadhain.

'It is a sign of nobility to patronise (*lit.* listen to) art' (?).

v. p. 172

180. Ciall chun tighe agus fial chun oinig.

'Sparing at home, yet lavish in hospitality' (?).

181. Fuiris fuine i n-aice mhine.

'It is easy to knead when meal is at hand,' *i.e.* Work is easily done when one has all the appliances for doing it. Var. *na mine* (for *mhine*). *Is fhurasda fuine dheanamh làmh ri min*, Sc. *T'e aashagh fuinney raad ta palchey meinn*, Manx.

182. Deacair taobh thabhairt leis na mná.

'It is difficult to trust women.' Cf. *Is deacair taobh do thabhairt le mnaoi tar th 'éis go bráth*, said by Cúchulainn to Niamh, Brisleach Mhór M.M. p. 30. *Ná tabhair taobh leis na mná*, Dánfhocail 257. *As mairg dobheir taobh re mnáoi tar cīs na mbriathar sin*, Buile Shuibhne p. 110. *Mairg léigeas a rún le mnaoi*, 'Woe to him who gives his confidence (*i.e.* love) to a woman,' Dánta Grádha p. 36; Dánfhocail 257.

183. Tástáil do dhuine muinteartha sul a dteastóidh sé uait.

"Prove your friend ere you have need of him." From Eccli. vi. 7: "Si possides amicum, in tentatione posside eum, et ne facile credas ei"

184. Mairg 'na mbíonn buarach iasachta air.

'Woe to him who has a stranger's spancel on him,' *i.e.* whose liberty is dependent on a stranger.

185. Deineann seilbh sásamh.

'Possession satisfies,' *i.e.* There is satisfaction in possessing a thing even though one does not consume it. Varr. *Deineann seilbh gnó. Tá sásamh i seilbh*, Clare.

186. An sguab nua is fearr sguabann an tig.

'The new broom sweeps the house best.' "A new broom sweeps clean."

187. Roinneann Dia na subháilcí.

'God shares out good things,' *e.g.* He gives wealth or intellect to one, happiness to another.

188. Cuimhnig sul a labharfair, agus féach rót sul a léimir.

'Think before you speak, and look before you leap.' See no. 150.

189. Deineann leanbh ciallmhar gasta athair subhach sólásach. Gidh eadh, deineann leanbh baoth beigchiallmhar máthair dhubhach dhólásach.

A translation of Prov. x. 1: "A wise son maketh the father glad; but a foolish son is the sorrow of his mother."

NLI P23

190. An té ná múineann Dia ní mhúineann daoine.

'He who is not taught by God, is not taught by man,' *i.e.* He who has not the grace to learn cannot be taught by anyone.

191. Mairg do-ní deimhin dá bharamhail.

'Woe to him who deems his opinion a certainty.' Var. *Mairg do-ní deimhin dá dhóigh*, which is the first line of a poem by Fearghal Mac Eochadha, and also occurs in an anonymous 16th or 17th cent. poem (23 F 16, p. 184). In popular language this now becomes (*Is*) *mairg a dhineann deimhin dá dhóchas.*

192. Ná faic a bhfeicir, is ná clois a gcloisir.

'See not what you see, and hear not what you hear.'

193. Gheibheann an capall bás faid do bhíonn an féar ag fás.

"While the grass grows, the steed starves." Var. *Mair, a chapaill, is gheóbhair féar*, 'Live, horse, and you will get grass.'

194. Ní thig luas is léireacht le chéile.

'Speed and precision do not agree.' "Good and quickly seldom meet." Var. *Ní théidheann luas agus léireas le chéile*, Clare. *Cha bhi luathas agus grinneas*, Sc. Begly (297a) translates "To make more hast[e] than good speed" by *Deifir le droichghníomh* and *Ní thig luas le léine*.

195. Ní fhéadfá rith is amhastrach dhéanamh.

'One cannot bark and run at the same time.' "You can't whistle and drink at the same time." Var. *Ní thagann rith is amhastrach le chéile.* Cf. *Ní féidir bheith ag ithe mine is ag feadaoil*, 'One cannot eat meal and whistle.' *Ní thugann an gobadán an dá thráig leis*, 'The sand-piper can't attend to two strands at the same time.' *Cha'n urrainn domh a' mhin ithe 's an teine shéideadh*, 'I can't eat meal and blow the fire,' Sc.; with this the N.E. and Welsh versions agree closely.

196. Tuigeann fear léighinn leathfhocal. NGP 373

'A man of learning understands half a word.' "Verbum sapienti satis." Cf. *Ní beag nod don eolach*, 'A contraction (in writing) is sufficient for a scholar.' Both these proverbs are found in one quatrain in Dánfhocail, 65.

197. Dealg láibe nó focal amadáin.

'A fool's remark is like a thorn concealed in mud,' *i.e.* it stings one unexpectedly. Otherwise in triad form; see no. 245 *infra*.

198. Ní hinniúchtar fiacla an eich do bronntar.

"Don't look a gift horse in the mouth," *lit.* 'The teeth of a horse given as a present are not scrutinised.' Begly (256b) has *Ní féachtar fiacladh an eich do bronntar*.

199. Ní giorraide an iall bheith san uisge.

'A thong is no shorter for having been in water.'

200. D'fhear cogaidh comhalltar síocháin.

'To a man equipped for war peace is assured.' "Si vis pacem, para bellum." This is the first line of a poem by Tadhg Dall O Huiginn, who, however, disclaims originality by calling it (l. 2) *seanfhocal nach sáruighthear*, 'a proverb that cannot be gainsaid.'

201. Trom an rud an leisge.

'Laziness is a load.' Var. *Is trom an t-ualach an fhallsacht*, Uls. *Is trom an t-eallach an leisg*, Sc.

202. Minic chaith duine sprot amach chun breith ar cholamóir.

'Often has a man cast a sprat to catch a hake.' Var. *Ag caitheamh bric amach chun bradáin a ghabháil,* Kilkenny. "A hook well lost to catch a salmon."

203. Mairg fhanann leis an lá déadhnach.

'Woe to him who waits until the last day.' "Delays are dangerous."

204. Ná cuir an mhaith ar cáirde.

'Postpone not a good action.'

205. Bíonn an aithrighe mhall contabharthach.

'To defer repentance is dangerous.' Compare the two last proverbs.

206. Fearr suidhe in' aice ná suidhe in' ionad.

'Better sit beside it than in its place,' *i.e.* Better save it than spend it. Var. *Is fearr suidhe 'na bhun ná suidhe 'na áit,* Clare and Galway.

207. Ar eagla na heasba is maith bheith coimeádtach,

acht ní abraim leat bheith leamh ná spadánta.

'It is a good thing to be economical in order to guard against want; but I do not recommend you to be mean or niggardly.'

208. Gan easba, gan iomarca, cuimnibh an iall ad ghlaic,
is gur mealladh an duine ná buinfeadh an t-iasacht as.

'Without pressing him either too little or too much, keep a sure grip on the reins, for he is a fool who would not get value out of the horse he has on loan.' The meaning is: 'It is foolish not to enjoy, with due moderation, the good things you have.'

209. Fearr súil le glas ná súil le huaigh.

'Better expectation of release from imprisonment than of release from the grave.' An encouragement to one who has a relative or friend imprisoned. Variants substitute the perils of the sea for the uncertainties of imprisonment. Thus: *Is fearr súil le béal an chuain ná súil le béal na huaighe. Bíonn dúil le béal fairrge, ach cha bhíonn le béal uaighe,* Uls. * Scottish has several versions, amongst them: *Bidh dùil ri fear fairge, ach cha bhi ri fear réilge,* 'The man at sea may return but not the man in the churchyard.' Welsh has *Mae gobaith gwr o ryfel; nid oes gobaith neb o'r bedd.*

* Bídh dùil ri bhuil cuain ach cha bhi ri beul uaigh.
Bidh dùil ri fear-feachda ach cha bhi ri fear-lice.

'There is hope of a man from war; there is no hope of anyone from the grave.'

210. Ní bhíonn an mhaith déadhnach aon uair.

'Good is never late.' "It is never too late to mend." Varr. *Ní déadhnach í an mhaith aon uair. Ní mall an mhaith aon uair*, Galway, Clare.

211. Déin connradh do reir sparáin.

'Let your bargain suit your purse.' Compare the next proverb.

212. Ná leath do bhrat acht mar fhéadfair a tharrang.

'Spread your mantle only as you can draw it,' *i.e.* Do not attempt more than you are able for. Var. (in Comhairle na Barrsgolóige); *Ná leath do bhrat ach mar fhéadfair a chumhdach.* "Cut your coat according to your cloth."

213. Stiúir gach maitheasa grádh Dé.

'The love of God directs everything good.' This is the first line of a poem attributed to Ó Dálaigh Fionn.

214. An té ghrádhas an dainseur, caillfear ann é. G. NGP 291

"He that loveth danger shall perish in it" (Eccli. iii. 27).

NGP240

215. B'fhearra dhuine an madra féin a' lúthgháir roimhe ná ag amhastraigh air.

'Better for a man to have even a dog welcome him than bark at him,' "Better to have a dog fawn on you than bark at you." Varr. *Is fearr an madra ag lúthgháir rómhat ná id choinne. B'fhearr do dhuine an madadh leis ná ina aghaidh*, Galway.

216. Mairg dhóigheas an athbhuaile.

'Woe to him who burns his old *buaile* (cattle-fold),' and has thus no reserve to fall back on if the new *buaile* should fail him, *i.e.* One should not burn one's boats. Cf. in 'Comhairle na Barrsgolóige': *Ná dóig an athbhuaile ar eagla go madh chruaidh dhuit casadh uirthi.*

217. Bíodh h'eagla roimh Dhia, agus coimeád a aitheanta.

'Fear God and keep His commandments.' Cf. Eccli. ii. 21.

218. Bíodh eagla ort is ní baoghal duit.

'Be afraid, and you'll be safe.' Very similar is the Mid. Ir. *Is cian ó ghuasacht cech faitech*, 'A timid man is far from danger,' PH. 4862, where it is spoken of as a proverb (*isin probeirb choitchind*).

219. Ar an rud nach féadfar do leigheas isí an fhoighde is fearr.

'For what cannot be cured patience is the best remedy.' "What cannot be cured must be endured." More concisely, *Beart gan leigheas foidhne is fearr air.* Cf *Níl leigheas ar an gcathú ach é mharú le foidhne*, 'The only cure for sorrow is to kill it with patience.' *Níl maitheas bheith ag seanchus nuair tá an anochain déanta*, 'There is no use in talking when the harm is done,' "No use crying over spilt milk."

220. Druid le fear na bruide agus gheóbhair connradh.

'Go to a man who is in a difficulty and you'll get a bargain.'

221. Sgoilteann an bhreab an chloch.

'Bribery can split a stone.' Var. *Breabtar an chloch*, 'Even a stone may be bribed,' Clare. In Scottish envy takes the place of bribery here: *Sgoiltidh farmad a' chlach.* *

222. Ní háil liom fear breibe.

'I like not a man who is bribed.'

223. Cnuasuigheann truipeall beart.

'Handfuls (of rushes) make up a load,' *i.e.* "Many a little makes a mickle." Varr. *Triopall do chnuasuigheann beart. Bailigheann brobh beart.* Begly (p. 418a) has *Cnuasuighid bruibh beart*, and also (pp. 418a, 460a) another Irish

equivalent: *Is mór na big a gceann a chéile*, which resembles the English "Many small make a great" (Camden). The same two proverbs are coupled by Dáibhí do Barra in his 'Párliment na bhFigheadóirí': *Is ciallmhar an ní an seanfhocal adeir 'Cruinníonn tripioll beart,' nó 'Is mór na big i dteannta a chéile.'*

224. Ní théid dlighe ar an riachtanas.

"Necessity knows no law." Var. *Níl dlighe ag riachtanas.* Cf. the following lines in Séamus na Srón's Faoisidin (23 B 36, p. 183):

Ná bíonn seasamh le heasba ná éigean,
Do réir mar chanaid an Eaglais naomhtha:
'Necessitas non habet legem.'

The Latin maxim ("Legem non habet necessitas") goes back to St. Augustine. Cf. also *mar ná tagann dlighe ar riachtanas*, in a *bharántas* by Seán Ó Tuama, Fil. na Máighe p. 106y.

225. Riachtanas máthair na géir-intleachta.

"Necessity is the mother of invention." Varr. *Múineann gádh seift. Brosnuigheann airc inntleacht*, Uls. *Ní airc innleachd*, and *Thig innleachd ri aimbeart*, Sc.

Rel. Celt. II, 503. ✶ ✶

226. Ná bris do gheasa.

'Break not your vows.' 'Fail not in your obligations.'

227. Mairg chailleas a gheasa.

'Woe to him who fails in his obligations.' So in Tór. Dhiarmuda agus Ghráinne (Oss. Soc. iii. 58) Osgar says: *Is fear truagh do chaillcas a gheasa*, 'He is a sorry wretch who fails to keep his bonds.'

228. Is ceirín do gach lot an fhoighde.

'Patience is a plaster for every wound.' A variant of no. 159 above.

229. Déineann breacloirgneach earraig formadach fóghmhair.

'The speckled-shins of spring is the envious one of autumn,' *i.e.* The farmer who is laggard in spring will envy his neighbours their better harvest. Cf. the Manx *Eshyn ta litcheragh ayns yn arragh, t' eh mooaragh ayns yn ouyr* (Cashen), 'He who is lazy in spring is envious at harvest-time.'

230. Miann óige imrighe.

'Youth likes to flit away.' Cf. *Is mian le hamadán imirce*, 'A fool is fond of removing,' Uls. *Is miann* (or *buidhe*) *le amadan imrich*, Sc. "Fules are aye fond o' flittin'," N.E.

231. Minic do cailleadh long lámh le cuan (nó i ngar don chuan).

'Often has a ship been lost close to the harbour.' "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

NOTE

Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, the compiler of the above collection of proverbs, was born at Glenagragara, near Glin, in the western part of Co. Limerick, about 1765. While he was still very young, he migrated with his father to Co. Cork; and much the greater portion of his long life he spent in the vicinity of Cork city. He died in 1837. All through life he was an indefatigable transcriber of Irish MSS., and his industry has preserved for us many things which would otherwise have been lost. He was also a competent poet, but most of his compositions are still inedited.

The collection has been taken from the R.I.A. MS. 23 G 20, pp. 85-89, which is in the handwriting of Mícheál Óg himself. It is headed *Seanfhocail mhatha a bprós sonn, as an leabhur dárab ainm an Seanduine.* That is to say, O'Longan copied them from a book (*i.e.* MS.) which was entitled *An Seanduine.* That this latter MS. was also written by O'Longan hardly admits of doubt. O'Longan was fond of giving names to his MSS.; and as a matter of fact portion of this MS. of his which he entitled *An Seanduine* now forms pages 1-44 of 23 G 25. A note, dated 1808, in 23 G 20, p. 221, refers to religious poems as being in *An Seanduine*, so that we may infer that the latter MS. was written before that date.

With the doubtful exception of the proverbs printed by Hardiman in his 'Irish Minstrelsy,* O'Longan's collection may claim the distinction

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* See Bibliography, *infra.*

of being the earliest collection of modern Irish proverbs. O'Longan's proverbs are representative of the proverbs which were current in Munster about the year 1800. The great majority of them are still in use, though not always, of course, in the exact words in which O'Longan gives them.* A few of them I have never met elsewhere, either in speech or in the printed collections, notably nos. 10, 20, 70, 72, 91, 98, 131, 179, 180, 199. O'Longan appears to have jotted down the proverbs in the first instance according as they occurred to him; and they are given here in the order in which he gives them. In the MS. there are occasional duplications (not reproduced here), thus no. 21 appears again between 117 and 118, no. 57 between 193 and 194, no. 204 between 210 and 211, nos. 163 and 185 between 213 and 214, and no. 56 between 219 and 220. A number of triads are intercalated in the MS. between 205 and 206, as explained in the introductory note to the next section.

In printing the text I have normalised here and there the spelling of the MS. I have in general retained such modern spellings as *-ig* (for *-igh* or *-idh*) and *-a* (for *-adh*), without, however, trying to be more consistent on these points than O'Longan himself. The following departures from the MS. spelling may

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*For one thing certain forms employed by O'Longan have now grown obsolete, such as *ni abair* (=ni abrann), *téid* (=téidheann), *faiceann* (=ficeann), *sul a* (=sara), *foighde* (=foighnne). So he occasionally uses *-as* as the ending of the relative form of the present tense, as well as the current *-ann*. He often omits *is* (*Fearr . . .* for *Is fearr . . .*); it is now more usual to insert it when an adjective follows.

be worth noting: no. 1 *gá air* MS. (for *'gar*); 2 *dhia;* 5 *san* omitted; 33 *much;* 34 *ćasgadh;* 36 *suabháilc*eadh; 41 *ndéan*; 77 *cladhac*ha; 86 *dhuine;* 87 *bhfćadfar* and *bheirith* (this spelling of *bhreith* also occurs in no. 202); 88 *mbiaidh;* 106 *sheasmhann* (so in 152 *marbhann* = maruigheann); 117 *mor taidhbhseach;* 129 for *bhíonn* the MS. has *bh*eadh, probably for *bheig* here as in 144 and 148; 161 *mhurbhógh*adh; 163 *uamhuin;* 166 *nduibh;* 171 for *bheadh* MS. has *bh*eadh, which may well stand for *bheith* here; 180 for *tighe* MS. has *.t.;* 212 *fhiadfar*; 230 *imbrighe*, with the gloss *.i. aistriúghadh*. For the second *bean* in 68 the MS. reads *p—*.

This collection of O'Longan's appears to have been utilised by Tadhg Ó Donnchadha in compiling his 'Seanfhocail na Mumhan' (1902). In the preface to this booklet it is stated that one of its sources was a collection of proverbs written by Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin in a R.I.A. MS. entitled "An Seanduine." By this is probably meant 23 G 20, which, as we have seen, professes to have taken the collection from another MS. with that title, but is not so entitled itself. But, apart from innumerable deviations from O'Longan's text, the proverbs in 'Seanfhocail na Mumhan' are sometimes given incorrectly,* and I have noted 21 of O'Longan's proverbs that do not appear in it at all.

* Compare, for instance, its versions of nos. 8, 21, 33, 70, 91, 111, 118, 133, 154, 157, 167, and 184.

II.

MODERN IRISH TRIADS

Towards the end of his collection of proverbs in 23 G 20 O'Longan has inserted (immediately after no. 205 *supra*) 38 triads and a couple of tetrads. The first six of these, and also the twelfth, are popular in character, and are given *infra* as nos. 232-238. The remaining 33 consist of more or less corrupt and modernised versions of some of the 'Triads of Ireland' edited by Kuno Meyer,* and ascribed by him on linguistic grounds to the ninth century. O'Longan's versions of these older triads were evidently taken from MS., and not handed down by oral tradition. As compared with the earlier text they show many corruptions, as well as occasional divergence of meaning due mainly to scribal endeavours to extract sense from obsolete words. Thus no. 87 of Meyer's text occurs as *Tri nidhthe nách hathantur go mbeadh géarchoidreamh no tásdáil agat orra, .i. bean, each 7 salann*, while no. 88 substitutes *tighe* for the obsolete *téiti* and reads *Tri buadha tíghe, .i. each maith, bean chaomh 7 cú luath*. These instances

* Viz., of the triads numbered by Meyer 68, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 87, 88, 91-96, 100, 103, 114, 122, 98, 126, 146, 148, 154, 160, 166, 167, 203, 204, 226, 233, and 234. The order in which they follow one another, it will be observed, is nearly the same as in Meyer's text.

exemplify the most successful modernisations; others of the triads would be quite unintelligible nowadays in the form in which O'Longan gives them.

A very similar collection of triads occurs by itself (without title) in O'Longan's hand in 23 G 25, p. 37, (the *An Seanduine* portion of the MS.). They number 51, viz., the 40 of 23 G 20* followed by versions of eight others of the 'Triads of Ireland'† and by three modern triads (printed as nos. 239-241 *infra*). The version in this MS. of no. 87 of Meyer's edition is: *Tri nidhthe nách hathantur go nbí cimilt ag duine leó .i. bean, each 7 salann.*

In the collection below I have, in addition to the nine triads printed from 23 G 20 and 23 G 25 (viz. nos. 232-241), brought together from various sources a number of triads current in the Irish of to-day. I have confined myself to those triads which are known in the Southern Half of Ireland;‡ but even within these limits the collection is, of course, far from being exhaustive.§

232. Cheithre nithe nách tugtha d'Éire-

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* The order in which they occur is somewhat different. If we number the 23 G 20 triads consecutively, the following is the order in 23 G 25: 6, 16, 4, 5, 7-11, 13-15, 17-35, 37, 36, 38-40, 3, 2, 12, 1.

† Viz., nos. 84, 85, 97, 109, 110, 115, 111, and 83, of Meyer's edition.

‡ Ulster triads will be found in Morris, nos. 1-30. Nicholson includes about 20 Scottish triads among his proverbs.

§ References to "D. Ó. M." are to an article by Domhnall Ó Murchadha in 'Misneach' of 9 July, 1921, in which 20 triads from S.W. Kerry are given. Nine of these are variants of those given below; the eleven others are not reproduced here

annach ionntaoibh leó, .i. adharc bhó, crúb chapaill, dranna madra, agus gáire Sagsanaigh.

'Four things which an Irishman ought not to trust,—a cow's horn, a horse's hoof, a dog's snarl, and an Englishman's laugh.' Compare Ó Dubhghaill's Leabhar Cainte, p. 117.

233. Trí nithe is giorra 'na bhfanann a rian, .i. rian éin ar chraoibh, rian luinge ar linn, agus rian fir ar mhnaoi.

'Three things which leave the shortest traces, bird on the tree, ship on the sea, man's company on woman.' Cf. *Cia híad na trī luirg nach bhfaghtar? Lorg luinge ar uisge, lorg éin air eiteóig, 7 lorg mná* etc., H.5.9, p. 183. This triad was apparently suggested by Prov. xxx. 18-19.

234. Trí nithe is sia 'na bhfanann a rian, .i. rian guail i gcoill, rian siséil i líg, agus rian suic i gcrích.

'Three things which leave the longest traces, —charcoal on wood, a chisel on a block of stone, a ploughshare on a furrow.'

235. Trí chomhartha an duine shona, .i. fál, faire, agus moichéirghe.

'The three signs of a fortunate man,—having a fence, keeping watch, and early rising.' A version in An Lóchrann, Dec. 1909, has *fál*

críoch, mochóirghe; another version, *ibid.* June 1916 (also D. Ó M.), has *fál, fasgadh, agus mochóirighe.* For E. Ulster Morris (30) has *foirseadh faladh, 7 mochéirighe.*

236. Trí chomhartha an duine dhona, .i. urradhas, eadaragáil, agus fínné.

'The three signs of an unfortunate man,—going bail, intervening in disputes, bearing testimony.' Compare Meyer's Triads, 135. A version in An Lóchrann, Dec. 1909, substitutes *codladh fada, tig gan ceangal, stáca gan díonú;* a Kilkenny version has *imirt chárdaí, ól, agus stríopachas* (Fáinne an Lae, 1 July, 1899). Cf. *ól, éad, agus iomardas* in Morris, 30.

237. Trí nithe bhíos geal 'na dtosach, breac na, lár, agus dubh 'na ndeireadh, .i. cómhar, cleamhnas, agus éintigheas.

'Three things that are fair at first, then dull, and finally black,—co-operation (in agriculture), a marriage alliance, and living in the same house.' Also in 23 O17, p. 13.

238. Trí beaga is fearr, .i. beag na curcóige, beag na caereach, agus beag na mná.

'The three things that are best if small,—a beehive, a sheep, a woman.'

239. Trí éirghe is measa do-ní duine, .i. éirghe ó aifreann gan críochnú, éirghe ó

bhia gan altú, agus éirghe ó n-a mhnaoi féin go nuig á hatharú.

'The three worst flittings,—leaving Mass before it is finished, leaving table without saying grace, and leaving one's own wife to go to another woman.' The same triad is found in Scottish: *Trí rudan a's mios' a rinn duine riabh—éirigh bho 'bhiadh gun altachadh, éirigh bho 'mhnaoi fhéin gu mnaoi fir eile, 's éirigh bho aifrinn gun a h-éisdeachd,* Nicolson, 372.

240. Trí téanam is fearr adeir duine, .i. téanam gus an aifreann, téanam a' daingniú, agus téanam go nuig an muileann.

The three best invitations,—'Come to Mass,' 'Come and make secure,' 'Come to the mill'

241. Trí fuama is fearr,—fuaim an tsúiste, fuaim na brón, agus fuaim an luinithe.

'The three best sounds—the sound of the flail, the sound of the quern, the sound of the churn-dash.'

242. Trí nithe do bhaineas le hól,—é ól, é iomchar, agus díol as.

'Three things in connection with drink,—to consume it, to carry it, and to pay for it' (GJ. 195, p. 242).

243. Seanduine, anduine, nó leanbh,

—triúr gur beag an mhaith comaoin do chur ortha.

'Three on whom it is useless to confer a compliment,—an old man, a bad man, a child.' (GJ. 191, p. 188). An Ulster version is *Maith ar sheanduine, maith ar anduine, agus maith ar leanbh, trí maithe a théid a mudha* (cf. Morris 8). The Sc. version is very similar (Nicolson 313).

244. Trí nithe nách iontaoibh,—lá breágh insa gheimhre, saoghal duine chríonna, nó focal duine mhóir gan sgríbhinn.

'Three things that are not to be trusted,—a fine day in winter, the life of an aged person, and the word of a man of importance unless it is in writing' (An Cl. Soluis, 29 April, 1899). Another Cork version reads *sláinte* for *saoghal*, and *duine uasail* for *duine mhóir* (GJ. 191, p. 188). A S. Galway version makes the three things not to be trusted 'a hound's tooth, a horse's hoof, and a gentleman's word' (*fiacail con, crúb capaill, nó focal duine uasail*, GJ. 184, p. 69). Compare no. 232 above.

245. Fiacail chon, dealg dóibe, agus focal amadáin, na trí nithe is géire le fagháil.

'The three sharpest things are: a hound's tooth, a thorn in mud, and a fool's remark' (GJ. 191, p. 189, which, however, reads less

correctly *soc con*. Canon Bourke's version is similar, with *múnlaigh* for *dóibe*. An Ulster version (MacAdam 556) substitutes 'a soft woollen thread that cuts to the bone' for the 'hound's tooth': *Focal amláin, agus dealg lábáin, agus snáithe bog ol(n)a a ghearras go cnámh.* Sometimes only two sharp things are mentioned; see no. 197.

246. Srón con, glún fir, agus cíoch mná, na trí nithe is fuaire le fagháil.

'The three coldest things are: a hound's snout, a man's knee, a woman's breast' (GJ. 191, p. 189, which has *soc* for *srón;* Beirt Ghaedhilgeóirí 46 = D. Ó M.). Scottish has *Trì rudan cho fuar 's a th'ann, glún fir, adharc mairt, 'us sròn coin,* and also *Gaoth fo sheòl agus sròn coin, dà rud cho fuar a's a th' ann.*

247. Na trí baill de dhuine is fusa do ghortú,—a ghlúin, a uillinn, agus a shúil.

'The three parts of the body that are most easily hurt,—the knee, the elbow, and the eye' (GJ. 180, p. 8, for S. Galway). So for Kerry (D. Ó M.): *Na trí nithe is nimhní, nú is gortuithí,—súil, glúin, agus uille.* Ulster Irish (Morris 6) agrees closely. So in Scottish: *Buille san tsùil, buille sa ghlùn, buille san uilinn, na trì buillean as duilich' fhulang* (Nicolson 73; Meyer Misc. 41).

248. Bean, muc, is múille, an triúr is deacra do mhúnadh.

'The three most difficult to teach,—a woman, a pig, and a mule' (GJ. 178, p. 829, for S. Galway). In Donegal: *Trí ní gan riaghail,—bean, muc, is múille* (GJ. 73, p. 6. = Morris, 4).

249. Tá trí saghas ban ann,—bean chomh mí-náireach leis an muic, bean chomh crostáltha leis an gcirc, agus bean chomh mín leis an uan.

'There are three kinds of women,—the woman as shameless as a pig, the woman as unruly as a hen, and the woman as gentle as a lamb' (GJ. 194, p. 232).) So D. Ó M.: *Trí shaghas ban,—bean mar chirc, bean mar mhuic, agus bean mar chaoire.*

250. Tá trí saghas fear ann,—fear graftha, fear fiadhaigh, agus fear gaoithe.

'There are three kinds of men,—the worker, the pleasure-seeker, and the boaster' (GJ. 194, p. 232; similarly D. Ó M.).

251. Na trí peataí is measa,—peata sagairt, peata bacaigh, nó peata muice.

'The three worst pets,—a pet priest, a pet beggar, a pet pig' (GJ. 187, p. 121, for Clare).

252. Na trí reatha is mó,—rith uisge, rith teine, nó rith éithigh.

'The three greatest rushes,—the rush of water, the rush of fire, the rush of falsehood' (GJ. 187, p. 122, for Clare).

253. Lá ó sgoil, Domhnach ó aifreann, agus lá ó chéird, trí nithe nách féidir leó casadh go bráth.

'Three things that can never return, a day away from school, a Sunday without Mass, and a day away from one's trade' (GJ. 191, p. 189).

254. Cúngrach tighe, cúngrach croidhe, cúngrach bídh, trí anacra móra.

'Three great evils,—smallness of house, closeness of heart, scantiness of food' (GJ. 51, p. 39; and cf. An Lóchrann, Dec. 1911).

255. Trí ruda ná bíonn aon mhaitheas ionnta nuair bhíonn siad críonna: sean-mháighistir sgoile, sean-chapall, sean-cheithearnach.

'Three things that are useless when old,—an old schoolmaster, an old horse, an old soldier (?)' (GJ. 79, p. 105).

256. Na trí ruda is deacra do thuigsint san domhan,—inntleacht na mban, obair na mbeach, teacht is imtheacht na taoide.

'The three most incomprehensible things in the world,—the mind of woman, the labour of the bees, the ebb and flow of the tide' (GJ. 76, p. 57). In a Kerry version Aristotle himself is said to have failed to understand these three things (D. Ó M.).

257. Na trí nithe líonas iothlainn,—tnúth, is soláthar, is síor-chaithis.

'The three things that fill a haggard,—ambition, industry, and constant vigilance' (GJ. 55, p. 104).

258. Faobhar, gaoth, agus grádh, trí nithe ná feictear go bráth.

'Three things that are never seen,—a blade's edge, wind, and love' (Fáinne an Lae, 1 July 1899, for Kilkenny). Cork versions, nearly identical, in GJ. 191, p. 189, and Irisl. M. Nuadhad, 1914, p. 6.

259. Trí nithe nách féidir fhoghlaim,—guth, féile, agus filidheacht.

'Three things that cannot be acquired,—a voice, generosity, poetry' (GJ. 191, p. 189; Irisl. M. Nuadhad, 1914, p. 6; D. Ó M.).

260. Trí leabhair a thug an t-airgead,—gur chuma leis cé aige go mbeadh sé, ná fanfadh sé ag aoinne ach tamall, ná fanfadh sé ag éinne ach an té go mbeadh cion aige air.

'Three oaths that money swore,—that it did not care who might possess it, that it would never stay long with any man, that it would not stay with any man save the man who loved it' (Irisl. M. Nuadhad, 1914, p. 6).

261. Trí shaghas daoine [bochta] atá ann,—duine bocht ar thoil Dé, duine bocht ar a thoil féin, duine bocht dá mba leis an saoghal.

'Three kinds of poor people,—the man who is poor by force of circumstances, the man who is poor voluntarily, and the man who is poor even though he own the world (*i.e.* the miser)' (*ibid.*).

262. Trí shaghas fear go dteipeann ortha bean do thuisgint,—fir óga, fir aosda, agus fir mheadhon-aosda.

'Three kinds of men who fail to understand woman,—young men, old men, and middle-aged men' (*ibid.*).

263. Na trí nithe is measa i dtig,—báirseach mná, simné deataig, agus an díon a bheith ag leigean tríd.

'The three worst things in a house,—a scolding wife, a smoky chimney, and a leaky roof' (*ibid.*, and An Lóchrann, Dec. 1911). Cf. Morris 16. This is an Irish version of a triad (ultimately based on Prov. xxvii. 15 etc.) which was well known in medieval Latin and English; see Skeat, 249.

264. Trí shaghas inchinne atá ann,—inchinn chloiche, inchinn cheurach, agus inchinn tsrotha.

'Three kinds of brain,—a brain hard as stone, a brain receptive as wax, and a brain unstable as flowing water.' (cf. Irisl. M. Nuadhad, 1914, p. 7).

265. Trí nithe nách buan,—bó bhán, bean bhreágh, tigh ar árd.

'Three things that are not lasting,—a white cow, a handsome woman, a house on a height' (An Lóchrann, March, 1911).

266. Trí nithe ná tagann meirg ortha, —teanga mná, cruite capaill búisteura, airgead lucht carthannachta.

'Three things that never rust,—a woman's tongue, the shoes of a butcher's horse, charitable folk's money' (An Lóchrann, Dec. 1911).

267. Trí nithe chómh maith le nithe níos feárr ná iad,—claidheamh adhmaid ag fear meathta, bean ghránna ag dall, droch-éadach ag fear ar meisge.

'Three things that serve as well as things that are better,—a wooden sword in the hands of a coward, an ugly wife married to a blind man, and poor clothes on a drunken man' (*ibid.*).

268. Trí nithe chómh maith leis na nithe is fearr le faghail,—uisge salach ag

múchadh teine, casóg bhréide lá seaca, arán dubh i n-am gortan.

'Three things that are just as good as the best,—dirty water when extinguishing a fire, a frieze coat on a frosty day, black bread in time of famine' (*ibid.*).

269. Trí nithe nách ceart do dhuine bheith 'na n-éamais,—an cat, an simné, is bean an tighe.

'Three things which a man ought not to be without,—a cat, a fireplace (*lit.* chimney), and a housewife' (*ibid.*).

270. Trí nithe nách ceart d'fhear maoidheamh asta,—méid a sparáin, breághthacht a mhná, milseacht a chuid leanna.

'Three things which a man ought not to boast of,—the size of his purse, the beauty of his wife, the sweetness of his beer' (*ibid.*).

271. Na trí nithe is gránna 'na gcineál féin,—bean chaol ruadh, capall caol buidhe, bó chaol bhán.

'The three ugliest things of their own kind,—a thin red-haired woman, a thin yellow horse, a thin white cow' (*ibid.*).

272. Trí nithe ná réitigheann le chéile

choidhche,—beirt bhan phósta i n-aon tigh, dhá chat os cionn aon luiche, beirt bhaitsiléir i ndiaidh aon óigmhná.

'Three pairs that never agree,—two married women in the same house, two cats with one mouse between them, two bachelors wooing the same young woman' (*ibid.;* also D Ó M.).

273. Luimneach a bhí, Baile-átha-cliath atá, agus Corcaigh a bheidh.

'Limerick was, Dublin is, and Cork will be (the most important city in Ireland)' (GJ. 191, p. 189). A Connacht version has Athenry, Dublin, and Arran: *I mBaile Atha an Ríogh a bhí, i mBaile Atha Cliath atá, agus i nÁrainn a bheas*,—Post-sheanchas ii. 140.

III.

PROVERBS IN IRISH LITERATURE

A number of the proverbs in Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin's collection *supra* have been illustrated by quotations of the same or similar proverbs from older texts; see especially nos. 3, 4, 9, 13, 14, 30, 34, 36, 51, 52, 57, 61, 76, 78, 86, 103, 104, 117, 119, 121, 132, 133, 134, 157, 163, 177, 200, 213, 218, 224, and 227. In the following pages I have brought together a number of other proverbs which I find quoted or alluded to in our literature, from the earliest times down to about the end of the eighteenth century. Later writers such as Dáibhí do Barra and Amhlaoibh Ó Súilleabháin often quote proverbs, but I have not drawn on these. It is hardly necessary to say that the present collection makes no claim to be exhaustive.*

It is often difficult to decide whether a particular sententious saying is, or is not, to be classed as a proverb. With the older poets,

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* So far as I am aware no attempt has hitherto been made to collect the proverbs found in our literature, apart from a note of Meyer's in his edition of Cath Finntrága (1885), pp. 83-85, where some 9 proverbs and 20 proverbial phrases are brought together.

for instance, it was a common practice to open a poem with a statement of some general truth (or what was meant as such), which may or may not be proverbial in character, *e.g. Ní léir d'aon a ainimh féin* (for the sentiment cf. MacAdam 318), *A teagh bheag tiaghar i dteagh mór, Mairg duine bhraitheas é féin*, and so on (cf. also nos. 163, 191, 200, 213, *supra*, and 275, 313, 326, *infra*). In the following pages I have in general confined myself to those proverbs which are definitely known to be such, either by their repeated occurrence or by being expressly referred to as a 'proverb' (*dearbhárusg, seinbhriathar*, or *seanfhocal*) in the context.

NGP 213

274. Aithnightear cara i gcruatan

"A friend is never known till a man have need." "A friend in need is a friend indeed." Current to-day in this form. An E. Ulster variant is *A n-am na ciorra* (=ceachaire) *aithnighear an charaid*, MacAdam 324.

None of our Irish proverbs can be traced further back in MS. than this, for it is found in the Milan glosses of the early ninth century: *Is and asgniintar in charait in tan mbither* '*in periculis*,' 'It is then that friends are known, when one is in danger,' Ml. 108b4. In the Irish Fierabras we have: *Is ann derbthar in cara in tan is mōr in ēgen* (RC. xix. 24), translating the Latin "In urgenti negotio fidelis amicus comprobatur." The same occurs in the native romance of Bruidhean Chéise Corann: *Is ann derbtar in cara in uair is mó in t-écen*, 'The

friend is proved when the need is greatest,' SG. i. 309. This form seems to be still known in Cork; cf. *An uair is mó an t-éigean 'seadh dearbhthar an fíor-chara* among proverbs sent by D. McCabe, GJ. 81, p. 140. Compare also no. 183.

The literary parents of this proverb in Irish, as in other languages, are Eccli. xii. 8-9 ("in malitia illius amicus agnitus est," etc.), and the line of Ennius quoted by Cicero: "Amicus certus in re incertâ cernitur."

275. "Is fiach ma gelltar."

'A promise is a debt,'—Tochmarc Étaíne (LU. 132a 27). In a poem in the Book of Leinster 147b 50) we have the couplet: *Is fiach ō geltair ri nech,* | *is fairchi breth briathar rīg,* ' 'Tis a debt when a promise is made to one; surer (?) than a judgment is the word of a king.' This couplet is quoted as a proverb in some versions of Ceisneamh Inghine Ghuil; cf. the corrupt text in 'Gadaidhe Géar na Geamh-oidhche,' p. 113, l. 630. A poem by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird begins *Is fiacha ar neach an ní gheallas* (cf. 3B14, p. 64).

The proverb is now obsolete in Irish, but is still preserved in Scottish in the forms *Is fiach air duine na gheallas e,* and *Am fear a gheallas 's e dh' ìocas,* 'He that promises must pay.' It is also found in Welsh: *Dyled ar bawb ei addaw,* 'Everyone's promise is a debt on him' (first printed in Salesbury's Oll Synnwyr, *circa* 1547). A similar proverb formerly existed in

English, viz., "Biheste is dette" or "Promyse is dette" (first in Chaucer; see Skeat 241).

276. Beó duine d'éis a anma, agus ní beó d'éis a einigh.

'A man may live after losing his life, but not after losing his honour,'—said by Cúchulainn in 'Foghlaim Chonculainn' (cf. RC. xxix. p. 30, where the text is misread and mistranslated). Compare Whittier's "When faith is lost, when honour dies, | the man is dead." MacAdam, 176, has recorded an Ulster version, in which *daoine*, 'people,' is substituted for
* *anma*: *Is beó duine i ndéidh a dhaoine, acht ní beó é i ndéidh a náire.* The Scottish version is practically identical with MacAdam's. Compare *Ní beó tar éis a náire | neach dá shláine san tsaoghal*, Dánfhocail 253. A slightly different version is quoted as a *seanfhocal* in 'Bruidhean Chaorthainn' (ed. Pearse, pp. 29-30): *Is beo neach d'éis a bhuailte, agus ní beo é d'éis a cháinte*, 'A man may live after being struck but not after being reviled.' To be reviled for niggardliness or cowardice was the greatest evil that could befall an Irishman in the old days; the great power wielded by the poets was, in part at least, due to the dread of being made a target for their satire. "Death before dishonour" was a sentiment that strongly appealed to our ancestors; see no. 134 *supra*. So in 'Togail Troí' (Calcutta, 1882, l. 638) it is said of the Trojans: *ba ferr leo a mbás ic cosnam a n-enig andás a fácbáil i mbethaid fo mebail 7 fó mélacht*, 'they pre-

ferred death in contending for their honour than to be left alive in shame and disgrace.'

277. "Is uaisli in clú inā'n t-ór."

'A good name is more precious than gold, PH. 7685 (in a translation of a Latin homily). Cf. Prov. xxii. i.: "Melius est nomen bonum quam divitiæ multæ." Modern Irish forms are *Fearr clú ná conách* (Hardiman), and *Is uaisle enóir ná ór* (MacAdam). A poem ascribed to Columcille has *Is buaine blad inā seoid*, Meyer's King and Hermit, p. 28. With this exactly corresponds the Welsh *Hwy yw clod na golud*, 'Fame lasts longer than riches,' printed in Salesbury's Oll Synnwyr (*circ.* 1547). For the sentiment compare nos. 70, 134 and 276.

278. "Is rí cech slán."

'A sound man is a king,' Three Mid. Ir. Homilies, p. 72 (with *rig* for *rí*). Earlier in LL. 147b 26: *Uasliu cech rád—rí cech slán*. It should be remembered that in ancient Ireland freedom from physical blemish was an indispensable qualification for a king.

279. Geal gach nua, searbh gach gnáth.

'Everything new is pleasing, everything familiar is distasteful.' Of frequent occurrence in our older literature. Thus in 'Serglige Conculaind' (Ir. T. i. 224) Emer says: *Is ālaind cech nderg, is gel cach nua, is cáin cech*

ard, is serb cach gnáth, thus rendered by A. H. Leahy:

> 'Fair seems all that's red;
> Seems white what's new alone;
> And bright what's set o'erhead;
> And sour are things well known.'

A poem in the Book of Leinster includes the following lines (147b 39):

> *Drūth cech mer, mianach cech baeth,*
> *brocach cech saeth, serb cech gnāth,*
> *gel cech nua, lond cech scíth,*
> *ní hinunn frīth fo-geib cách.*

i.e., 'Recklessness is foolish, giddiness is wanton, trouble is sorrowful, familiarity is distasteful, novelty is pleasing, weariness is prone to anger,—dissimilar are the effects of different things.' The latter half of this quatrain appears also in a poetic dialogue between Fíthal and Cormac mac Airt (Hib. Minora, 82; LL. 149a 21). In 'Tecosca Cormaic' we have (p. 24) *Gel cech* (sic leg.) *núa, náma cech gnáth*, this hankering after novelty being reckoned as one of the marks of folly. In the same text (p. 28) a fierce onslaught on the fair sex begins by declaring that women are *serba sírgnáise*, i.e. 'people whose constant companionship is cloying.' The latest instance I have noted in the literature occurs in a 17th century poem by Muircheartach Ó Hifearnáin: *Geal gach nua, searbh gach síorghnáth* (Torna's edn. of P. Haicéad, p. 117). Scottish still has *Is odhar gach sean, 's is geal gach nodha, gu ruig snodhach an fhearna*, 'Everything old is dun,

cf. Fernaig Ms. p. 173

and everything new is white, even to the sap of the alder.'

Welsh offers a remarkable parallel to *Geal gach nua* in the proverb *Hardd pob newydd*, 'Everything new is beautiful,' which is found in print as early as *circ.* 1547 in Salesbury's 'Oll Synnwyr pen Kembero ygyd.' Erasmus has "Grata novitas," and for English J. Clarke (Adagia Anglo-latina, 1639, p. 228) gives "Everything's pretty when 'tis new."

280. Ní maith aister domnaigh."

'A Sunday journey is not good,' Tochmarc Becfola, SG. i. 85. In the Book of Fermoy version of the same tale the text is *Ni maith imadall in domnaich* (R.I.A. Proc. Irish MSS. Ser. I. pt. 1. p. 176). In ancient Ireland travelling on Sunday was forbidden by the Cáin Domnaig, except in cases of necessity (cf O'Looney's note, *ibid.* p. 196). A poem by "Feylum Mc Dowle" in the Book of the Dean of Lismore begins "*Ne math swille sin donit*," i.e. *Ní maith siubhal san domhnach* (Reliq. Celt. i. 92).

281. Doras feasa fiafruighe.

'Questioning is the door of (*i.e.* the way to acquire) knowledge.' In one form or another this proverb occurs frequently in our older literature. *Tosach eolais imchomarc*, 'Enquiry is the beginning of knowledge,' is an old saying ascribed both to Flann Fína (Anecd. iii. 16) and to Fíthal (ed. Thurn., p. 12). *Ferrdi fis fiarfaigid*, 'Knowledge is bettered by enquiry,'

occurs among a number of proverbial sayings quoted in the Battle of Magh Rath (p. 160.); *Dá dtrian feasa fiafraighidh*, 'Enquiry is two-thirds of knowledge,' occurs in a poem by Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, *circ.* 1213 (23 D 4, p. 125); while in the 14th century Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh writes *Doras feasa fiafruighidh* (Dánfhocail 66).

282. "Ní fhétar dul seoch an cindeamhain."

'There is no escaping Fate,'—Compert Mongáin (Voyage of Bran, i. 60). Cf. *Ní hionmholta cathughadh anaghaidh na cinneamhna;* in a late text of O. C. Uisneach (ZCP. ii. 142.) This idea of the unavoidability of Fate occurs frequently in our older literature; in particular one's death was regarded as inevitably associated with a predestined time and place. *Nī thesairg trú teiched, nī tarba éc d' ingabāil, uair trī huaire nach imgaibther .i. uair éca, uair gene, uair choimperta,* 'Flight saves not a man who is doomed to have his life cut short, it is profitless to shun death, for there are three times that cannot be avoided, the time of death, the time of birth, the time of conception,' Battle of Magh Rath, p. 172. Again *Nī bī duine ar doman gan a fhōd urdalta airchennta oidhedha d' urmaisi, gin go raibe tacha tapaid ná esbaide engnama air,* 'There is no man who does not reach his appointed and destined place of death, even though he should have no want of vigour or lack of valour,' *ibid.* p. 268. In testimony of this the author quotes

the beginning of an old poem which is variously ascribed to Adhamhnán and to Cormac mac Cuileannáin:

Trí fótáin nach sechainter,
cia toiscet na habrochtair,—
fót in gene, fót in báis,
ocus fót ind adnacuil.

Trí uara ná tairiset
fri tráig ocus fri tuile,—
uair gene, uair choimperta
uair scartha anma duine.

"Three places that cannot be avoided . . . the place of birth, the place of death, and the place of burial. Three times that stay not for ebb-tide or for flood,—the time of birth, the time of conception, the time when the soul departs' (cf., for text Meyer's Selections from Early Irish Poetry, p. 5, and ACL. ii. 137). Similarly Ferdiad says in the Táin Bó Cualnge (ed. Windisch, 3665).:

Is ēicen do neoch a thecht
cosin fót forsa mbí a thiglecht,

'Everyone must go to the place where his final bed is [destined to be].' A poem by Maoileachlainn Ó Huiginn on the death of Aodh Mág Uidhir near Cork in 1600, includes the following quatrain (cf. 3 C 12, p. 417):

Dá mbeith síol Adhaimh uile
ag anacal aonduine,
go fód an bháis do bhiadh sin
ag triall ar áis nó ar éigin,

'Though all mankind should try to rescue a

man [from his fate], yet willy-nilly he would continue journeying to his death's [appointed] place.' A corrupt version of this quatrain occurs in a marginal note in Egerton 88; see O'Grady Cat. p. 121.

283. Is dortadh flaitheasa ríghe don tsósar roimh an tsinnsear.

'It is the destruction of sovereignty to give the kingship to the younger before the elder,'—occurs twice in Conghal Cláiringneach (I.T.S. v. pp. 22, 24). Cf. *Assedh ro ba gnáithbés dóibh oirdneadh an tsindsir ar bélaibh an tsóisir*, Beatha Aodha Ruaidh (cf. ed. Murphy, p. 112)

284. Is bith cáich ar uair an bith so.

'This world is the world of everyone in turn,' *i.e.* "This world is all a fleeting show," to quote Thomas Moore. This occurs in FM. p. 1804, s. a. 1583. Earlier in LL. 147 b 43: *In bith is bith cáich ar úair.* Cf. in the sayings attributed to Morann: [*Is*] *étarbae n-inderb n-indless etir cāch ar uair ar cach die in bith sa*, ZCP. xi. 85. Cf. also *ind ráith dar éis caich ar uair*, 'the fort [remains] after each one in turn,' in a poem, ascribed to Berchán, on the fort of Rathangan, Co. Kildare (Meyer, Miscellanea Hibernica, p. 25).

285. Is feirrde maith a móradh.

'A good thing is bettered by being increased,' —Fearfeasa Ó Maolchonaire in Gen. Reg. et Sanct. Hib. (ed. Walsh), p. 136. This proverb

is of frequent occurrence in the older literature. *Dligid maith mórad* is one of the sayings ascribed to Flann Fína (Anecd. iii. 14) and to Fíthal (ed. Thurneysen, p. 16). So in the advice given by Conall Cearnach to Cuscraidh in 'Cath Airtig'; *Mōradh maithe is toirr* (*.i. is dīr*) *duit*, 'Thou oughtest to increase good,' Ériu viii. 173. *Ferrdi maith mōr-thormach* occurs among some old sayings quoted in 'Cath Muighe Rath' (ed. O'Donovan, p. 158). *Móide gach maith a móradh* occurs in a poem by Aonghus Fionn (ed. McKenna, p. 45, l. 10). The proverb is alluded to in a line of Tadhg Dall's: *Ná habair maith do mhórodh*, 'Bid not good to be increased' (cf. O'Gr. Cat. p. 411). It is now obsolete in Irish, but is still known in Scottish in the form *Is fheairrde gach math a mheudachadh*. *

286. Ní glic nach gabhann teagasg.

'He is not wise who will not be instructed'—Dánta Grádha, p. 42; also in the poem 'A cholann, chugad an bás.' In one form or another this proverb occurs frequently in our literature. Thus: *Sái cech so-choisc*, 'Every docile person is a sage,' Tec. Cormaic, p. 28. *Is súi cech so-thincoisc slán*, LL. 147b 45. *Tosach saīthe sochoisce*, 'Docility is the beginning of wisdom,' ascribed to Flann Fína (Anecd. iii. 16) and to Fíthal (ed. Thurneysen, p. 12). *Is gnáthach gach saoi so-theagasga* is quoted as a proverb in Dáibhí do Barra's 'Parliment na bhFigheadóirí.' *Ferrdi ciall comairli*, 'Sense is bettered by counsel,' among old sayings quoted in 'Cath Muighe Rath' (ed. O'Donovan, p.

158). Cf. *Feirde macámh a mhúnadh*, 'A youth is the better for being instructed,' in a poem by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh (Ir. Monthly, Sep. 1919, p. 512). *Más duine glic tú gabh comairle*, 'If you are wise, take advice,' Ériu v. 128.

A current form is *Glacann fear críonna comhairle*, 'A wise man accepts advice,' Morris, 727. Cf. also *Is olc nach ngabhaidh* (sic) *comhairle, acht is míle measa a ghabhas gach uile chomhairle*, 'It is bad not to take advice, but it is far worse to take every advice,' MacAdam
* 133. Also in Scottish thus: *Is trù nach gabh comhairle, agus 'trù ghabhas gach comhairle* (Mackintosh).

287. "Is treise flaith fiora."

'A prince is mightier than men,' *i.e.* than commoners,—B. Aodha Ruaidh, p. 52 (where it is mistranslated). In Cath Ruis na Ríg, p. 20, *in n-uair rapo threissiu flaith firu* seems to be used punningly in the sense of 'when beer was stronger than men' (*i.e.* when men had been overcome by it), from a rare homonym *flaith* meaning 'beer.'

With the natural meaning of the phrase (that in B. Aodha Ruaidh) may be contrasted the
* democratic Scottish proverb *Is treasa tuath na tighearna*, 'The people are stronger than the
* ruler.' A variant (Edinb. MS.) has *buaine*, 'more lasting,' for *treasa*. Manx similarly has *Stroshey yn theay na yn chiarn* (Cregeen). So too in Welsh: *Trech gwlad nac arglwydd*, 'A land is stronger than a lord.'

288. "Is ferr síth sochocad."

'Peace is better than (even) easy warfare,'—Togail Troí 1454 (Ir. T. ii.). Similarly Flann Fína (Anecd. iii. 19), and Fíthal (ed. Thurneysen, p. 15). Also in LL. 147b 35: *Is ferr síd sochocad sruith.* Compare *Ferr dáil debuith* or *Ferr dál debech*, 'Better a conference than contention,' ascribed to Flann Fína and to Fíthal; and *Is ferr cech dāl dia tic síd*, 'Best is a conference from which comes peace,' LL. 147b 26.

289. "Gach sluagh nach saigh, saighfidher."

'Every army that attacks not will be attacked,'—Beatha Aodha Ruaidh, p. 46, where it is put into the mouth of Aodh Ruadh and referred to as 'a well-known ancient proverb' (*derbhāroscc airrdherc ō chēin*). It also occurs in Foghlaim Chonculainn, RC. xxix. 22. In a poem attributed to Gilla-comgaill Ua Slébín the line occurs: *Mini saige, saigfear ort*, 'If you do not attack, you will be attacked' (Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh, p. 124). We have here the essence of the theory of a defensive offensive in warfare.

290. Ní sluagh neach ina aonar.

'A solitary man makes not an army,'—quoted by the Four Masters (p. 1804, s.a. 1583) along with no. 61. Scottish has *Cha sluagh duine 'na ònar* (Cameron); in the Edinb. MS. *Cho sluagh duine na onrachd.* Compare *As doras*

báis beag-shluagh, 'A small army is a door to death,' Cath Muighe Léana, p. 104.

291. Luighidh iolar ar uathadh.

'Many overpower few,' *i.e.* "Providence fights on the side of the big batallions,"—FM. p. 1940, s.a. 1593, where it is called a *seanfhocal*. The FM. copy it from Beatha Aodha Ruaidh (p. 64: *an dearbhārusc . . . .i. luighidh iolar for úathadh*). Earlier it appears in C. Ceallacháin Caisil, p. 42: *Is gnāth go loigenn ilar ar uathaid.* Now obsolete, but cf. *An-iomad na lámh a bhaineas a' cath*, 'Numbers win the battle,' Monaghan (GJ. 143, p. 117).

292. Ní ar líon óg brister cath acht tri nert an Choimdhedh.

'It is not through numbers a battle is won but through the strength of the Lord,'—Beatha Aodha Ruaidh, p. 208, where it is called 'a proverb handed down from antiquity' (*seinbhriathar ó chēin mháir*). Aodh Ruadh's biographer records it as having formed part of O'Donnell's address to his troops before the battle of Bealach Buidhe in 1599, where with inferior numbers he routed Sir Conyers Clifford. Much earlier we find it in a poem in the Book of Leinster (147b 35): *Nī ar lín óc brister cath.* Another instance is *Ní ar líon óg bristear cath, acht is tré fhurtacht an C[h]oimdheadh 7 tré fhírinne flatha*, Three Fragments (I.A.S. 1860), pp. 178-180, referring to a battle fought in A.D. 868. Compare the paraphrase in King Diarmaid's address to Cuimín Foda: *Nach fetradh-*

aisse, a chléirig, nach ar líon na cruth brister cath acht amail as áil ra Dia? (SG. i. 397), or, in Keating's version: *Tuig, a chléirigh, nach iomad curadh chuireas cath, acht mar is toil re Dia* (FF. iii. 922). Cf. O'Leary, Niamh 317: *Ní lionmhaire a dheinean neart i gcómhnuighe, ná ní hé a bheirean buadh.*

293. "Ní fríth, ní fuighbhither, breithemh bus fíriu cathráe."

'There has not been found, nor will there be found, a juster judge than the field of battle,'—Beatha Aodha Ruaidh, p. 168, where this 'famous proverb' (*senārasc airdherc*) of Morann mac Maein forms part of the address of O'Neill and O'Donnell to the Irish troops just before their victory at the Yellow Ford in 1598. It will be found among the Proverbs of Morann in Thurneysen's edition, ZCP. xi. 83.

294. Ní gnáth ár gan élóidhtheach.

'Seldom is there a slaughter from which no one escapes,'—Four Masters, p. 1776 (s.a. 1582). Current forms are: *Níl aon chath ná teagann duine as*, Clare; *Níl cath dá mhéid nach dtigeann duine as*, cf. 3 C 21, no. 63; and *Is cruaidh an cath ó nach dtig fear innsidh an sgéil*, MacAdam 571. Scottish has *Is cruaidh an cath as nach tig aon fhear.* These, particularly the two last, are closely paralleled by the English proverb "'Tis a hard battle where none escapes."

295. "Is airdhenu sercci sírshilliuth."

'Constant gazing betokens love,'—Tochmarc Étaíne (Ir. T. i. 121). Obsolete; but might be modernised *Comharthaí grádha sír-fhéachaint*

296. "Ussa éc earnbás."

'Any death is easier than death by the sword,'—Irish Cambrensis (Eng. Hist. Rev., 1905, p. 82).

297. Is gnáth sealḃh ar gach síor-iasacht.

'A long-continued loan usually confers ownership,' *i.e.* Prescription gives title,—Me Guidhir Fhearmanach, p. 30.

298. Is le fear na bó an laogh.

'The calf belongs to the owner of the cow.' Var. *Is le gach buin* (or *bó*) *a laogh*. Both of these are current forms. A well-known episode in the life of St. Columcille tells how he made a copy, without permission, of a book belonging to St. Finnén, who thereupon claimed that the copy belonged to him no less than the original. King Diarmaid mac Cearbhaill decided the dispute in Finnén's favour, his judgment being: *Le gach boin a boinín* (*.i. a laogh*), *agus le gach lebhur a leabrán*, Beatha Col. Chille 178; or, in Keating's version, *gurab leis gach boin a boinín is gurab leis gach leabhar a mhaicleabhar*, i.e. 'As to every cow belongs her calf, so to every book belongs its transcript' (Forus Feasa, iii. 1394; cf. also FM. p. 194).

299. Ding de féin a sgoilteann an leamhán.

'A wedge of itself splits the elm,'—well-known in Southern Irish. So in an early 14th cent. poem by Aonghus (mac Chearbhaill Bhuidhe) Ó Dálaigh: *Ginn de féin .λ . sgoiltes go léir in leamán*, O'Gr. Cat. 362. Ulster (MacAdam 546) and Scotland substitute the oak for the elm: *Geinn dí féin* [*dheth fhéin* Sc.] *a sgoilteas an darach*. The proverb is thus paraphrased by Donnchadh Bàn (ed. Calder, p. 210):

Chuala mi mar shean-fhacal
Mu'n darach gur fiodh còrr e,
'S gur geinn dheth fhéin 'ga theannachadh
A spealtadh e 'na òirdnibh.

300. "Is do áibill fhásas breo."

'From a spark groweth a blaze,'—Three Mid. Ir. Homilies, p. 30. "A small spark makes a great fire." So *Is da aibil da-thaed breo*, in a poem in the Book of Huí Maine (ACL. ii. 139). A modern form is *Is beag an t-éibheall a lasas teine mhór*, MacAdam 38. In Scottish: *Is tric a bheothaich srad bheag teine mór*, 'A small spark has often kindled a great fire.' The origin is probably biblical; cf. "A scintilla una augetur ignis," Eccli. xi. 34 (cf. also Jac. iii. 5).

The proverb is combined with another of similar meaning in the following: *Do-ghnī an t-aoin Dia rail don dearcain 7 breo-thealcha don aoibhil*, 'God makes the acorn to be an oak, and the spark to be a mighty conflagration,'

Beatha Aodha Ruaidh, p. 180. The first part of this is paralleled by Chaucer's "an ook com'th of a litel spyr" (Skeat, no. 171; for an earlier version from Aelfric see *ibid.* p. 136). A third saying of similar import was: *Da ní muc mhór dá arcān*, *i.e.* 'A tiny young pig becomes a big one,' ACL. ii. 139.

301. Ughdar gach neach go labhrann.

'Everyone is wise until he speaks,' Aodh Ó Domhnaill in the 'Contention of the Bards' (p. 138, st. 15); also in a satirical poem on an Ulster harper by Domhnall Gorm Mac Lochlainn (23 A 45, p. 9; author's name in H. 6. 12, pt. 3, p. 59). Similarly Fearfeasa Ó'n Cháinte: *Más fhíor, is ughdar gach neach | go labhairt*, 23 L17, fo. 102b.

302. Beodha gach bráthair fri aroile.

'Active is one kinsman against another,' *i.e.* Kinsmen, when they fall out, fight one another vigorously. Quoted as a well-known proverb (*dearbhāruscc airdearc*) by the Four Masters (p. 1768), when describing the battle fought in 1581 between Aodh Ó Domhnaill and his nephew Conn aided by Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill.

303. Bíodh a dhomhan féin ag gach fear.

'Let every man have his own world.' When Brian Ó Néill, after the death of Gofraidh Ó Domhnaill in 1258, demanded hostages and submission from Tír Chonaill, Domhnall Óg Ó

Domhnaill, who had just returned from a stay in Scotland and had been elected chief, replied to Ó Néill's envoys by quoting the above proverb (*do rāidh an tseinbriathar airdhirc tria san nGaoidhilcc nAlbanaigh boí occo acc agallaimh na ttechthadh* (sic) *.i. go mbiadh a doman fēin ag gach fer*, FM. s.a. 1258). It will be noticed that the Four Masters imply that the proverb was peculiar to 'Scottish Gaelic,' which Domhnall Óg would have learned during his stay in Scotland. If their authority may be relied on here, the inference is that in the thirteenth century the Gaelic of Scotland was already recognised as having diverged from even Ulster Irish.

304. "Aithiu cech delg is ou."

'The youngest thorn is the sharpest,' PH. l. 4136, where it is referred to as a *derbárusc* or proverb. So in verse in Ac. Sen., l. 1384: *Is áithe cech ndelg as só.* Also in Stowe D. 4. 2, fo. 66a, 2 (Meyer). Now obsolete; but in Modern Irish it might be rendered: *An dealg is óige isí is géire*, or *Nuair is óige an dealg, iseadh is géire bhíonn sí.* Stokes compares *Luaithi mang iná máthair*, 'The fawn is swifter than the dam,' in Cor. Glos.

305. "Colann cen ceann duine cen anmcharait.'

'A person without a spiritual director is as a body without a head,'—Martyr. Oengus, p. 182; and cf. *ib.* pp. 64, 464 (the latter from LL. 283b 26).

306. "Caraidh siúr cen co ccarthar."

'A sister loves though she be not loved,'—quoted as a *seinbhríathar* in Buile Shuibhne, p. 56. It is also known in Welsh, being given by Davies (1632) in the form: *Cerid chwaer diried* (=diriaid) *cyn ni charer*, 'A sister loves a bad man though she herself be not loved.'

307. "Gabhlánach in rét an scéluighecht."

'Story-telling is a complicated affair,'—Ac. Sen. l. 3669, where it is called a *seinbriathar*.

308. "Is denmnitach in raet in Gaeidel."

'The Irishman is an impatient fellow,'—Ac. Sen. l. 4480, where from the context we infer that it was a well-known saying.

309. Do réir mar chuiris an dair, freanc féin í.

'As thou hast planted the oak, even so bend it thyself,' *i.e.* Extricate yourself unaided from troubles of your own making,—Tór. Dhiarmada agus Ghráinne (Oss. Soc. iii. p. 206). Compare "As you have made your bed, so you must lie on it," in Irish *Mar rinne tú do leabaidh, luigh uirthí* (cf. MacAdam 36), or *Luigh ar an leabain a chóirigh tú dhuit féin*.

310. "Ní bhí friothaire ar nach ffaghthar faill fá dheóidh."

'There is never guard so good that an enemy may not some time find its vigilance relaxed,'—Four Masters, p. 1896 (s.a. 1590). Compare the current proverb (W. Muns.): *Bí choidhche ag faire is gheóbhair uair na faille*, 'Be always on the watch and you'll get your opportunity.'

311. "Immgaib ág 7 no-t-imgēba." of NGP 344

'Shun danger and it will shun thee.' This is given in PH. 4864 as the Irish equivalent of the Latin proverb "Devitabis periculum et devitabit te." That it was a proverb in Irish also is shown by the occurrence of *Imgaibh ágh 's rod imgéba* as a line of verse in the Battle of Magh Rath, p. 172. Compare no. 218 *supra*.

312. Dein maith i n-aghaidh an uilc.

'Do good in return for evil.' Still current in this form; also in Scottish (*Dean math 'an aghaidh an uilc*). A literary instance occurs in Aonghus Fionn: *Déanta maith i n-aghaidh uilc* (ed. McKenna, p. 44, st. 6). Cf. "Noli vinci a malo, sed vince in bono malum," Rom. xii. 21. *

313. Ón aird thuaidh thig an chabhair.

'From the North help comes,'—quoted as a *seinbhriathar* by Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh in the 'Contention of the Bards' (ed. McKenna, p. 59, where the two following instances are also quoted). It is the first line of a poem by Tadhg Óg Ó Huiginn (YBL. 381b 24; O'Con. Don's MS.; 23 F16, p. 115). In a poem written in 1599 Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha, after saying that O'Donnell's invasion of Thomond in that year

had been foretold in an ancient prophecy, adds *Adtuaidh iarthar cabhair cháigh*, 'From the North all aid is sought' (cf. Beatha Aodha Ruaidh, p. 198, whence FM. p. 2104; O'Donovan's note in the latter text shows that he was unaware that Maoilín Óg's line merely expressed a proverb). What the origin of this saying may have been, it is difficult to conjecture. ✶

314. Ní thig ní san dorn dúnta.

'Nothing comes into a closed hand,'—Tadhg Óg Ó Huiginn, who refers to it as a proverb (*guth beag asé aitheanta*, O'Con. Don's MS. fo. 24a). Scottish preserves it with little change: ✶ *Cha d'théid nì sam bith san dorn dùinte*, of ✶ which there is a variant *Cha'n fhaigh dorn dùinte dad*. For the current Irish form see no. 124. Compare also the next proverb.

315. Ní ghabhann dorn dúnta seabhac.

'A closed hand catches no hawk,' Muns. In Ulster, *Cha ghabhann dorn druidthe seabhac*. ✶ *Cha ghlac dòrn dùinte seobhag*, Sc. A literary allusion occurs in the poem beginning "Mairg 'gá lagaid na lámha," (cf. 23 N 15, p. 152):

Tig i láimh an tí chleachtas
an seabhac 'gá mbí aithne;
an lámh dá bhfuighe folamh,
ní dá dheóin (fh)anas aice.

There is a similar proverb in English: "Empty hands no hawks allure" (Ray); this is found as early as Chaucer,—see Skeat 235.

✶ Refers to Scottish gallóglaigh ?

316. Is tighe-de an brat a dhúbladh.

'The mantle is the thicker of being doubled.' Best preserved in Scottish: *Is tiughaid' am brat a dhùbladh* (Nicolson), otherwise *Is tibhide a cheirt a dūbladh* (Edinb. MS.). In Ireland it has been noted only in Ulster, by MacAdam (354), who gives it in the form *Is teóide* ('warmer') *do'n mbrat a dhúbladh*. Its usual application is to the marriage of relatives. Literary allusions are: *gur dúbalta an grádh | ag na mnáibh ó bheith 'na ngaol*, in a poem by Riocard do Búrc (Dánta Grádha, p. 47); and *brat is tanoide a thilleadh*, in a poem by Tadhg Dall Ó Huiginn (ed. Miss E. Knott).

317. Is fada ón chréacht an t-ionnrach.

'The tent is applied far from the wound.' This is said by Iubdán on a certain occasion in Aidedh Ferghusa (*Is fada ó'n chrécht in tionnrach*, Silv. Gad. i. 246). It is still known in Co. Monaghan in the form *Is fada ó'n chreich* [leg. *chneidh*] *an ceithrin* [leg. *ceirín*], "'The plaster is far from the wound.' Said if one suggested a far away remedy for anything,' Morris Suppt. no. 36.

318. "Is fochen aged fhécheman."

'Welcome is a debtor's face,'—Aided Conculaind (RC. iii. 184).

319. Annamh tréan nach dteagthar ris.

'Seldom is there champion who does not meet

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with some reverse,'—Maghnus Ó Domhnaill (Dánta Grádha, p. 3). Still known in Scotland in the form *Cha'n cil tréun ris nach cuirear*, which Nicolson translates 'The brave will be tried.'

320. "Is trumma cach ndédinach."

'The most recent grief is the heaviest to bear,'—MacConglinne p. 57. A later variant is *Is doilghe na déidhionaigh*, which occurs in a poem by Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird (Studies, 1919, p. 258). So *Is doilgi gach deghinach* in a marginal note in Eg. 88 (O'Gr. Cat. 135). In Modern English there is a similar proverb: "The last evil smarts most" (Bohn's Handbook of Proverbs, p. 509).

321. Ní bhí an tubaist acht mar a mbí an spréidh.

'Misfortune comes only where wealth is,' said to have been the mock-serious comment of St. Columcille when he learnt that the pet-animals of his brother-saint Mochua had died (Keating, FF. iii. 1135). It also occurs among some anonymous verses addressed to one Iollann on the death of a pet-bird: *Ní bhíonn tubaiste acht mar mbí sprē*, 23 N 33, p. 471. Still heard in Donegal: *An áit i mbíonn spréidh, bíonn tubaiste*, GJ. 85, p. 13.

322. "Nocha dlig demun dīlgud."

'A demon is not entitled to forgiveness,'—Battle of Magh Rath, p. 134 (in verse), and

again p. 136. It also occurs in the Senchus Mór in verses ascribed to Dubthach moccu Lugair in the time of St. Patrick: *ar nī dlig demun dīlgud*, Laws i. 8.

323. Deireadh cumainn comhaireamh.

'Reckoning up is friendship's end.' Occurs thus in a poem of Tadhg Dall's (O'Gr. Cat. 435):

Briathar ghnáth, a ghnúis fháilteach,
deiredh cumainn comáiremh.

324. Is fada le fear furnaidhe.

'One who is waiting thinks the time long.' Still current in W. Kerry in the form *Is fada le fear fiúnraoi* é*. In W. Cork (Ballyvourney) I have heard it as *Is fada le fear feitheamha* (pron. *fihú*) *é*. Literary instances show that it was formerly well-known, *e.g. Fada le fer bfurnoidhe*, Gramm. Tracts, p. 46; *Asé adearair riamh roimhe | 'Cian le fearaibh furnoidhe,'* in the anonymous poem "A theachtaire téid budh thuaidh," O'Con. Don's MS. fo. 139b. Cf. *Le a lucht furnaidhe is fado*, Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird ('Studies,' 1919, 258).

There is a very similar proverb in Welsh, viz., *Hir pob aros*, 'Long is every waiting,' which is found in print (in Salesbury's Oll Synnwyr) as early as *circ.* 1547.

**Fiúnraoi (fionnraidhe)* is a modern form of the Mid. Ir. *furnaidhe* (earlier *irnaide* and *urnaide*), 'waiting, remaining.' It occurs as *fionnraoi* (with a variant *fonnraoi*) in D. O Bruadair ii. 284. The modern metathesis of *-rn-* is already seen in the form *funnraidi* in Lis.Lives,1.1945. So far as I know the word is now obsolete except in Kerry.

* cf. Leabhar Clainne Aodha Buidhe, p.67

325. An t-each do buaileadh sa cheann bíonn sé eaglach.

'The horse that has been struck on the head is timid thereafter.' Some such proverb as this is alluded to in a poem in Dánta Grádha, p. 32:

As t'fhocal ní fhuilim teann;
each do buaileadh 'na ceann mé.

* The Scottish version runs: *An t-each a bhuailear 'sa cheann bidh e sgàthach.* Current Irish versions have substituted *an té* for *an t-each.* Thus: *An té buailtear sa cheann bíonn eagla air*, Monaghan (GJ. 95, p. 178). *An té buailtear sau mullach* (or *san chúl*) *bíonn faitchíos air*, Galway (GJ. 51, p. 38; 178, p. 827). Cf. also *Is eaglach an té ghortuightear*, Waterford (Sheehan). See no. 365.

326. Dlighidh ollamh urraim ríogh.

'A king should honour a man of letters.' This occurs in a poem by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh (cf. Ir. Monthly, Aug. 1919, p. 459), and as the first line of a poem by Seán Buidhe Mac Bruaideadha (*ibid.* Mar. 1921, p. 112). The sentiment it expresses was one which naturally commended itself to the poets. Cf. *Dligid aide urraim*, 'A teacher should be honoured,' ascribed to Flann Fína (Anecd. iii. 14). *Dlighidh fili a fhiadhughudh*, 'A poet should be honoured,' in a quatrain in Stowe MS. 992 (GJ. 45, p. 194b).

327. "Is dénta áil d'égin."

'A virtue (*lit.* will) must be made of neces-

sity,'—C. Catharda, l. 2702, where it is called a *seabriathar*. It hardly survives in Ireland, but is still found in Scotland: *Dean àill de'n éigin*, "Make a virtue of necessity." The common original for all languages is St. Jerome's "facere de necessitate virtutem" (cf. Skeat, no. 199).

328. "Labraid duine, innisid Dia."

'Man talks, but God sheweth the event.' This occurs as a line of verse in 'Aidedh Ferghusa,' Silv. Gad. i. 246. Compare "Man proposes, but God disposes," which was doubtless first suggested by Prov. xvi. 9, and which has been popularised (though not originated) by the 'Imitatio Christi' ("Homo proponit, sed Deus disponit," i. 19). Canon O'Leary, whose 'Eisirt' is a re-telling of 'Aidedh Ferghusa,' was so struck by the resemblance of the line above quoted to the well-known proverb of the 'Imitatio' that he adopted it in his translation of the latter book ('Aithris ar Chríost,' p. 33).

329. Cailltear lán luinge ar son aon duine amháin.

'A ship is (often) lost with all on board on account of one man' (cf. 3C 21, no. 64). MacAdam's (503) version is: *Bāitear a[n] long ann a n-aon pheacaidhe*. A sixteenth century poet, Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird, has *Báittear lucht arthraigh uile | le a bhfaghthair d' ulc aonduine* (cf. 3 C 12, p. 225). So in Betha Colaim Chille (p. 98) when a ship is seen sink-

ing with her crew, Columcille explains to Baoithín that God has permitted this on account of one sinner that was on board (*do fulaing sē lucht na luinge do báthad ar son an ēnpecaid do bī indti*). The proverb is alluded to in Merriman's Cúirt, l. 788: *Lán na luinge chum duine ní bháidhfinn*, i.e. 'I would not punish the many for the sins of the few.' As MacAdam remarks, the proverb was probably suggested by the story of Jonas.

330. Fand duine mar nach treórach; dall uile gach aineólach.

'Weak is a man where he has no guidance; blind is everyone who lacks knowledge,'—from verses ascribed to St. Columcille in Betha Colaim Chille, p. 198. Scottish has *Is dall duine far nach eòlach*, and *Is dall gach aineolach* Welsh has *Dall pob anghyfarwydd*, 'Blind is every unskilled person.' Compare also *Is mall gach cos ar chasán gan eólas*. 'On an unknown path every foot is slow' (MacAdam 153); in Scottish *Is dìomhain gach cas air thìr gun eòlas* (where for Mackintosh's *diomhan*, "tardy," Nicolson substitutes *diombuan*, "fleeting").

Very similar is the Scottish *Is dall duine anns a' cheird nach d' fhòghluim*, 'A man is blind in a trade he has not learnt,' with which we may compare *Oscar cách i ceird araili*, 'Everyone is ignorant in another person's trade,' quoted by O'Davoren (ACL. ii. 431), and Tadhg mac Dáire's variant, *Dall cách i gceird aroile* (cf. 23 L 17, fo. 130b). See also nos. 58 and 354.

331. Mar chaithis an choinneal, caith an t-órlach.

'As you have spent the candle, spend the inch,' *i.e.* As you have gone most of the way, go the whole way. Still current; a variant is *Mar thug tu an choin[n]eal, tabhair an t-órlach*, F. Keane (12 Q 13, pt. 3, p. 72). Archbishop Maolmhuire Ó Huiginn thus paraphrases it:

Fuilngeam feadh an órlaigh-se
mar do caitheadh an choinneal.

Diarmaid mac Sheáin Bhuidhe has (p. 58): *Mar chaithis an solus ná coigil an mion-órdlach.* In a quatrain in 23A 45, p. 55, a lover says to his lady: *Tabhair an choinneal mar thugais an t-orlach dhūinn*, 'Grant me the candle as you have granted me the inch.'

A Scottish form is *Seach gun d' thug mi 'n réis, bheir mi 'n òirleach*, 'As I have given the span, I'll give the inch' (Nicolson). Mackintosh's version is *O na rinn mi 'n oirleach, ni mi 'n rèis*, in which *oirleach* and *rèis* exceptionally change places. Manx has *Tra tou jannoo yn trie, jean yn oarlagh* (Cregeen), 'Since you are doing the foot, do the inch.' Compare the N.E. (borrowed from Sc. Gaelic?) "Dree out the inch as ye hae done the span."

332. Is beag an rud is buaine ná an duine.

'How small a thing outlives a man.' Still

well known.* It occurs as early as 1560 in a scribal note in Rawl. B 512: *As bec ani as buaine nan duine* (Hib. Minora, p. 84). The Scottish form is very similar: *Is beag an ni nach buaine na duine* (Cameron), 'It is a small thing that does not outlive a man.'

333. Déan taise le truagh is gruaim le námhaid.

'Be mild towards the wretched, but stern towards an enemy,'—MacAdam 553 (he writes *truaighe* for *truagh*). For literary usage cf. *taise le truagh 7 troid le tréan*, Eachtra Lomnochtáin, p. 29; and *borb le tréan is séimh le lag-bhuidhin*, Fr. Seán Ó Briain (Fil. na Máighe, p. 74). These recall Vergil's well-known line "Parcere subiectis et debellare superbos." Very similar is *Bat cruaid fri cruas . . . bat moeth fri maīthi*, ascribed to Fíthal (ed. Thurneysen, p. 18).

334. Béim i n-aghaidh béime agus goin i n-aghaidh gona.

'A blow for a blow, and a wound for a wound,'—Deargruathar C.C., p. 25; also in Cath Muighe Mucraimhe, GJ. 208, p. 32 So *béim san mbéim is goin san ngoin*, in a poem by Niall Ó Ruanadha (cf. O'Gr. Cat. 501). Compare the Scriptural "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (Deut. xix. 21).

* Exceptionally *Is beag rud*, etc., in GJ. 185, p. 89, wrongly translated "There are few things more lasting than man." Contrast GJ. 51, p. 39; 55, p. 112 (note 46).

335. Ní theicheann cú roimh chnáimh.

'A dog does not flee from a bone,' *i.e.* even though it be thrown at him,—Bruidhean Chaorthainn, p. 30. So *Cha sgal cù roimh chnàimh*, 'A dog won't howl at a bone,' Sc (also in Edinb. MS.). N.E. has "A dog winna yowl if ye fell him wi' a bane."

W. Ni chŵyn ci er ei daro ag asgwrn.

336. Is mó a thaidhbhse ná a thairbhe.

'Its outward display is greater than its value,'—a current proverb (or rather proverbial phrase); also with *toirt*, 'bulk,' for *taidhbhse*. Alluded to by Giollabrighde Ó Heóghusa in his poetical preface to his Teagasg Críosdaidhe (ed. 1707, p. 3), when he says of his book *Uille a tharbha iná a thaidhbhsi*, i.e. 'There is more profit to be derived from it than its appearance would lead one to think.'

337. Maith gach cunnradh i bhfad uait.

'Good seems every bargain that is far away,' —Dánta Grádha, p. 38. This still survives in Scottish: *Is geal gach cùnradh* (or *cùmhnant*) *a thig am fad.* Cf. no. 117 *supra.*

338. Dá dtrian cára cumhochta.

'Might is two-thirds of right,'—in an anonymous poem in 23 I 40, p. 45. "Might is right." Cf. *Is cert caich* [leg. *cách?*] *amail a nert*, LL. 147b 41. *Claoidheann neart ceart*, Hardiman. *Théid neart air cheart*, Sc. Tadhg Dall was

doubtless alluding to some such proverb when he wrote *Bheith fá neart an té is treise | isé ceart na críche-se*, 'To submit to the might of the strongest is this country's (*i.e.* Ireland's) only right' (cf. O'Gr. Cat. 428).

339. Ní fearr biadh ná ciall.

'Good sense is no less important than food.' This is the current form. An older form would appear to have been *Is fearr ciall ná cuid*, to judge from Dánta Grádha, p. 32, where a lover, rejected on account of his poverty, says bitterly:

Duine dona adubhairt riamh
go madh fearr ciall ná cuid.

340. Ná séid aoibheal gan fhadúdh.

'Blow not on dead embers,' *i.e.* Do not attempt a hopeless or impossible task. This occurs in a poem by Fearfeasa Ó'n Cháinte in the 'Contention of the Bards' (ed. McKenna, p. 214). It is given in the dictionaries of O'Brien and O'Reilly (s.v. *aoibheal*), the latter of whom calls it an "old proverb."

341. Mairg do loisgfeadh a thiompán leat.

cf. Measgra Dánta 78 f/3

A well-known Scottish proverb runs: *Is mairg a loisgeadh a thiompan duit*, 'Pity him who would burn his *tiompan* (a kind of harp) for you.' The story goes that a harper once, having nothing else to make a fire with, burned his harp in order to make a fire for his wife

who was benumbed with cold; but she repaid his sacrifice immediately afterwards by eloping with another man (cf. Nicolson, p. 267; An Deo-Grèine, Jan. 1909, p. 51).

This proverb was formerly well known in Ireland too. Thus Seán (mac Muiris) Ó Hurthaile says, speaking of youth: *Mairg do loisg a thiompán ré!* i.e. 'Alas for him who has sacrificed his all for her!' And Pádraigín Haiceud has (p. 6): *Is mairg do loisg a shop 's a thiompán libh.*

342. Ná téidheadh do shúil thar do chuid. cf NGP 280

'Do not entertain extravagant hopes.' 'Do not expect too much,'—Galway. So *Do chuaidh mo shúil tar mo chuid*, Dánta Grádha, p. 32. The word *súil* here may also be taken in the sense of 'eye' rather than 'expectation,' when the phrase has a slightly different meaning. Cf. Begly 203b, where *Do chuir sé a shúil thar a chuid* is given as a rendering of the English saying "His eyes are bigger than his belly." So in Canon O'Leary's Aesop (ii. 70) *Ná leig do shúil thar do chuid* is explained as 'Do not let your eye go beyond what is your own property; do not covet what is not your own.'

343. Nuair chruaidheann an tslat, is deacair í shníomh.

'When the twig grows hard it is difficult to twist it,'—current proverb; var. *lúbadh* (for

shniamh). Aonghus Fionn has (ed. McKenna, p. 66): *Mar do ní crann críona di | nocha n-am sníomha slaite*, 'When the twig has become an old tree is not the time to bend it.' So *An tslat nuair chruaidheann le haois, is deacair a sníomh 'na gad*, in the poem (17 cent.?) ✱ 'A leinbh atá i dtúis do shaoghail.' Scottish has *An car a bhios 'san t-seana mhaide 's duilich a thoirt as*, 'The crook in an old stick is ✱ hard to take out'; and *Is ann fhad 's a bhias an t-slat maoth is fhasa 'lùbadh*, 'When the twig is tender it is easiest bent,' "Best to bend while it is a twig." Cf. Dugald Buchanan (ed. Maclean, p. 54):

Na labhair an sean-fhocal,
's deimhin leam 's fìor e,—
'An car théid san t-sean mhaíd,'
gur h-ainmig leis dìreadh.'

The meaning is expressed in Prov. xxii. 6.

344. Is socair a chodlas duine ar chneadh dhuine eile.

'One sleeps tranquilly on the hurt of another,' *i.e.* It is easy to put up with the misfortunes of others,—an Ulster proverb (MacAdam 409). Very similar is the well-known aphorism of La Rochefoucauld: "Nous avons tous assez de force pour supporter les maux d'autrui." The ✱ Scottish version is *Caidlidh duine air gach cneadh ach a chneadh fhéin*. That the proverb is an old one in Irish may be inferred from allusions to it in poems of about A.D. 1600. Thus one of Giollabrighde Ó Heoghusa's poems begins: *Deacair suan ar chneidh gcarad*, "'Tis hard to

be insensible of a friend's hurt'; while a poem by Eochaidh Ó Heoghusa contains the lines *Aa codladh ar a cneidh sin | atáid cuid do chloinn Mhílidh.* 'Upon her wound (*i.e.* Ireland's oppression) some of Míleadh's race slumber' (cf O'Gr. Cat. pp. 407, 479). Compare, in Gallagher's Sermons, *Na codail air chneadh hanama* (ed. 1751, p. 49), and *colladh air an bpeacamh agus gan an aithirdh* (leg. *aithrighe*) *a dheanamh* (*ib.* p. 66). The phrase is still known; cf. for Galway Irish *B'fhurusda léi codladh ar a gcneadh*, 'she would have no scruple in remaining unmoved by their sufferings,' T. Ó Máille, 'An Ghaoth Aniar,' p. 57.

345. Anaidh fear sona le séan.

'The lucky man waits for prosperity,' *i.e.* prosperity comes to him without effort on his part, while he merely waits for it,—Dánta Grádha, p. 29. A fuller form of the proverb is given by MacAdam (no. 11): *Fanann duine sona le séun, agus bheir duine dona dubh-léum*, '. . . but the unlucky man gives a blind (or disastrous) leap.' A version given by J. O'Daly (I.L. Misc. 93; also in GJ. 56, p. 126) is nearly identical: *Is minic d'fhan fear sonuidhe le scun, agus do bheir fear donuighe doi-lēim.* There is a very similar Scottish version (which Nicolson, p. 175, illustrates from a folk-tale): *Fanaidh duine sona ri sìth, 'us bheir duine dona duibh-léum;* Cameron's version has *sèimh'* for *sìth.* A kindred Scottish proverb is: *Cha 'n e 'n latha math nach tigeadh, ach an duine dona nach fanadh*, 'It is not that the good day came

Sc. Cha 'eil air an duine shona ach a bhreith.

not, but that the unlucky man would not wait.'

The same idea is seen in the current Irish proverb *Ní bhíonn ón bhfear sona ach é bhreith*, 'A lucky man needs but to be born,' with which the Welsh *Nid rhaid i ddedwydd ond ei eni* exactly agrees. Scottish has *Cha 'n eil do dhuine sona ach a bhreith, is bidh duine dona 'n a lom-ruith.*

NGP112 *

346. Is fearr duine ná daoine.

'A man is better than men,' *i.e.* One good man is better than many worthless ones. This is found in Fearfeasa Ó'n Cháinte (I.T.S. xx. 110), and in Piaras Feiriteur (l. 584). So Seán Ó Gadhra: *Fíor gur fearr duine 'ná dias*, GJ. 187, p. 115. The proverb is still preserved in Scottish, but not, I think, in Irish. An exactly similar proverb is found in Welsh: *Gwell gwr na gwyr*, which was first printed in Salesbury's 'Oll Synnwyr,' *circ.* 1547.

NGP246 *

347. Ní choinnigheann an soitheach acht a lán.

'A vessel holds only its fill,' Uls. (MacAdam 443). Morris (808) quotes *Cuach tar a lán ní líontar* from a 16th cent. poem. Cf. *Ní fachtar as na soighthighe | acht an lán do bhíos ionnta*, Dánfhocail 155. Cf. also *Cha dtig a bhaint as a[n] tsac ach a[n] lán a bhíos ann*, 'One cannot take more out of a sack than the full of it,' MacAdam 444. Scottish has *Cha chùm an soitheach ach a làn*, and *Cha tig as an t-soitheach ach an deoch a bhios innte.*

* *

Sc. Cha chum an soitheach Gàidhealach ach a làn.

348. Ní hionann dul ann is as.

'Coming out is a different thing from going in.' Art Óg Ó Caoimh quotes this as a *seanfhocal* in the Contention (p. 228). Nowadays one hears *Ní hionann dul go tigh an rí agus teacht as*, or *Ní hionann dul go dtí an baile mór agus teacht as*, 'Going into the king's house (*or* the town) is one thing, getting out is another.' With this compare *Is sleamhain iad leacacha an tighe mhóir*, 'Slippery are the flagstones of the mansion door,' of which another version appears in a quatrain in an Edinburgh MS. (Rel. Celt. ii. 406):

Seanfhocall is fior re aithris:
'Sleamhuinn starseach an tigh mhoir';
comhairle bheirinn air mo charaid
gun teachd ach annamh da cóir.

349. Bíonn nimh ar an aithne.

'There is pain in prohibition.' Quoted as a proverb by Keating: *Is móide bhíos dúil 'san nídh, bheith ag a thairmeasg air; 7 is de-sin atá an seanfhocal adeir go mbī neimh ar an aithne*, TBg. 98.

At the present day the use of the expression seems confined to W. Munster, where, however, the original meaning of the proverb has been forgotten and the whole has become reduced to the stereotyped phrase *fé mar a bheadh an nimh ar an aithne*, which is used in a sense equivalent to the English 'as (ill) luck would have it.' [I have heard some W. Cork speakers employ *aithinne*, 'firebrand,' for *aithne* in this

phrase; but the latter is the original word here.]

A similar reduction of what was originally a proverb to a mere set-phrase is seen in the Kerry *ó b'anna(mh) leis an gcat srathar a bheith air*, used with the meaning 'since you (or I, etc.) seldom find yourself in your present favourable position,' literally 'since the cat seldom has had a straddle on him.' The E. Ulster form (apparently used as a full proverb) is *Is annamh le cearc adhastar bheith uirthi* (Morris 1369). The Scottish form is *B'ainmig leis a' chirc aghartan a bhi aice*, "applied," says Nicolson, "to persons affecting luxuries unsuitable to them."

350. Is leór ó dhuine a dhícheall.

'It is sufficient to do one's best.' This occurs in O'Molloy's Lucerna Fidelium (*Lor ó dhuine a dithchioll*, p. 2). Cf. *ós nós ó dhuine a dhíchioll* in Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín's prefatory poem to Begly's Dictionary. A current form is *Is leór ó Mhóir a dícheall*, 'It is sufficient for Mór to do her best.'

Cf. NGS 93: Cha dean duine don' ach a dhìchioll.
Welsh: ni eill neb namyn ei allu

351. Nī mó an sgiling ōn rīgh no an chīonóg ruadh ōn mbocht lābāin.

'A shilling from the king is not more than half a farthing from a poor labouring man,' *i.e.* A poor man's mite is as much as a big donation from a wealthy man,—O'Molloy Lucerna Fidelium (1676), p. 2.

352. Nī hionann bodach is Dia.

'A churl and God are not the same,' *i.e.* God is very different from His creatures,—O'Molloy, Lucerna Fidelium, p. 29. Still known in this form.

353. Nī ar aonchois thāinig Pāttruic go hEirin[n].

'It was not on one foot that St. Patrick came to Ireland,'—used by O'Molloy (Lucerna Fidelium, p. 330) in the sense of 'I am not dependent upon that (argument) solely,' 'I have another string to my bow.' Morris (973) gives a current Armagh version: *Cha dtainic Pádraig go hEirinn ar a aon-chois.*

354. Námha ceard muna cleachttar.

'A trade that is not practised is an enemy,' *i.e.* it does more harm than good. This occurs in a quatrain in a MS. of about 1600, and is there called a *seanfhocal*; see Dánfhocail 228. It is still well known in Connacht and Donegal in the form *Is námhaid an cheird gan a f(e)oghlaim*, 'A trade not (properly) learned is an enemy.' Scottish has *Is i nàmhaid duine a' cheaird nach cleachd e*, and also *Is diù a' cheaird nach foghlamar*, 'A trade which is not learned is worthless.'

355. Do ghiolla gan bhuin mar choin ní beag é féin.

'One who is cowless must be his own dog,'

i.e. A poor man must forage for himself,—quoted as a proverb in a poem by Tomás Ó Glíosáin (Fil. na Máighe, p. 55). A current version is *Ní beag do dhuine gan chuid, de choin, é féin,* Cork (GJ. 64, p. 61; etc.). Francis Keane gives *Ní beag do dhuine gan lōn mar choin é féin*, 12 Q 13, pt. 3, p. 72.

356. Ní bheathuigheann na bréithre na bráithre.

'Mere words will not feed the friars.' Well-known to-day. Thus paraphrased by P. Haiceud (ed. Torna, p. 40): *Ní bhiathaid na briathra na hórda.* English proverbs of similar import are "Fair words butter no parsnips," and "The belly is not filled with fair words." The latter is found in Ulster Irish as *Cha líontar an bolg le caint* (MacAdam); in Scottish as *Cha lìon beannachd brù.*

357. Is giorra deoch ná sgéal.

'A drink is shorter than a story.' A literary instance occurs in a composition of D. Ó Bruadair's, *circ.* 1663 (I.T.S. xi. 96). The Scottish form is similar, and so too is (except for its orthography) the Manx *'S girrey jough na skeeal.* In Northern English it occurs as "A drink is shorter than a tale," which is doubtless, as Nicolson suggests, a translation from the Scottish. According to Mackintosh the Scottish proverb is employed to "abridge a tedious tale, or too long a story," while Kelly Manx Dict.) says that the Manx version is

used " when a person is desired to cease in his story and to pass the bottle."

The usual meaning, however, of the proverb both in Irish and in Scottish is ' A drink comes before a story,' and this also appears to be its sense in the passage in Ó Bruadair. *Giorra* means ' nearer ' as well as ' shorter,' and this fact may have caused the alteration in meaning, if such there was. Hence we find substitutions for *giorra* which more clearly bring out the normal meaning of the proverb, viz. *túisge* in Irish, and *luaithe* in Scottish. The latter is also found in Irish in Dánfhocail, 222, and the former in Scottish in the Edinb. MS. Cf. also *Tagann deoch roimh sgéal*, Galway (GJ. 183, p. 56).

358. Is dual deireadh don díoghrais.

' The last place is meet for the best beloved.' This occurs frequently in 17th cent. literature, its ordinary use being to introduce the last and dearest among a group of friends whom the writer is enumerating, very much as one says in English " Last, but not least." Thus in a poem written on his leaving Ireland in 1614 Brian Mac Giollapádraig after bidding farewell to several families finally mentions the Kavanaghs, and adds:

snī cheileamh, mo núar, a nois
gur dúal deireadh don díoghrois

(H. 3.19, p. 57). Similarly *Dual gach díoghrais ʃa dheireadh*, Aonghus Ó Dálaigh, p. 12, and (with *an* for *gach*) Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, ' Studies,' 1920, 568. So in a poem of uncertain

authorship: *Ní nár deireadh don díoghrais* (cf. 23 C 8, p. 232; GJ. 145, p. 149). In a shortened form, *deireadh don díograis*, it occurs in Seán Ó Conaill's 'Tuireamh na hÉireann.' It is only in this shortened form that the proverb has survived in Irish (cf. Irisl. M. Nuadhad, 1914, p. 6). Scottish has also preserved it in an abbreviated form: *Gach dìleas gu deireadh*, 'The best-loved last.'

359. Coiléan gach cú go fiadhach.

'Every hound is a pup until he hunts,'—in a poem by Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha, 23N 14, p. 104.

360. Molaidh gach duine a dhúthchas.

'Everyone praises his own land,'—Brian Ruadh Mac Conmidhe (3 C 12, p. 206). So *Bádhach neach ré shean-dhúthchas*, Tadhg mac Dáire (I.T.S. xx. 42). Compare *Is ferr dūthchas inā gach ní*, 'One's native land is better than anything else,' Oided Mac nUisnig (Ir. T. ii. 126).

361. Isé an duine an t-éadach.

'Clothes make the man.' "Fine feathers make fine birds." Still current; a variant is *'Sé an t-éadach a ní an duine* (cf. MacAdam 376.) There is a literary instance in an anonymous 17th cent. poem (I.T.S. xi. p. 132):

Seanfhocal so buainleantar:
'An t-éadach is é an duine.'

The proverb is often added to, and the addi-

tions are worth noting. J. O'Daly gives *'Sē an duine an t-eudach, agus is greugach ē an biadh;* while 3 C 21 (no. 189) has *An duine an t-éudach 7 an gréagach a bhiadh.* Compare the Scottish *Is e 'n gille 'n t-aodach, ach 's e 'n laochan am biadh,* 'Clothes make the lad, but food makes the fine lad.' Other Sc. versions are *Is e 'n duine an t-eudach, 's cha duine as 'eugmhais* (Cameron), and *Is e 'n duine 'n t-aodach, 's cha'n i 'cholainn bhreugach.*

362. Ní bhíonn an rath acht mar a mbíonn an smacht.

'There is no luck where there is no authority,' *i.e.* "Spare the rod and spoil the child." This is quoted in a sermon composed by Conchubhar MacAirteáin in 1724 (Seanm. M. N. i. 188); and is still well known. Cf. "Qui parcit virgae odit filium suum," Prov. xiii. 24.

363. Ní thig leat dhá mhaighistir a shásamh.

'You cannot satisfy two masters,'—Morris 1522. From Matt. vi. 24. *Deacair foghnamh do thoil dá thighearna* is the first line of a poem ascribed to Mathghamhain Ó Huiginn in St. A. v. 2, fo. 52b (but anon. in O'Conor Don's MS. and 23 F 16). Cf. PH. ll. 710-711. In a quatrain in an Irish MS. (A.D 1659) in Göttingen the lines occur:

Más mian leat bheith diadha, ná géill don tsaoghal;
Dá thighearna do riaradh ní héidir d'aon.

364. Is minic do bhuin duine slat a bhuailfeadh é féin.

'Often has a man cut a rod to beat himself.' Common to-day (with slight variations, such as *chun é féin do bhualadh*). It occurs as follows in a poem by Muiris mac Dháibhí Dhuibh (cf. 3 B 5, fo. 45a): *Minic do chum a bhuailte | théid duine do bhuain slaite.* The proverb is alluded to by Domhnall Mac Bruaideadha: *Tig an cumann druim tar ais; buailtear duine dá shlait féin*, Dánta Grádha, p. 36 (the same lines occur in another quatrain, Dánfhocail 95). The
* Scottish form is *Is iomadh fear a chaidh do'n choille air son bata da dhruim féin*, 'Many a man has gone to the wood for a stick for his own back.' In English a similar proverb is found as early as Chaucer (Skeat 153):

"For it is seyd—man maketh ofte a yerde
With which the maker is himself y-beten."

365. Bíonn eagla ar an leanbh a dóitear.

"A burnt child dreads the fire." Otherwise *Leanbh loisgthe fuathann teine*, Hardiman i. 403; *Bíonn eagla na teineadh ar an leanbh dóite*, MacAdam (and cf. Morris, 1518). Cf. also Begly's rendering (p. 94b): *Eagluídhidh an leanbh dóighte re san tteine.* A literary paraphrase is furnished by a poem written about two centuries ago by Diarmuid (mac Dhomhnaill mhic Fhínghin Duibh) Ó Súileabháin. He is declining an invitation to a convivial party on

the ground that he had too often before been 'burnt' by strong liquor:

Is cleachta leis an leanbh beag, cidh gann a chiall,
Nuair shatalas ar ailhinne nó ar a shamhail do phian,
Go seaehnann an lasair ins gach ball 'na mbiadh.

This proverb in all its Irish forms is based upon the English, which goes back to about the year 1300 (see Skeat 286). For a native proverb of similar import see no. 325.

366. Ní iarrfadh an t-athair an mac san mbácús, muna mbeadh sé féin roimhe ann.

In Séan Ó Neachtain's 'Stair É. Uí Chléire,' l. 1059. Of English origin; cf. "No man will another in the oven seek except that himself have been there before" (Heywood), otherwise "The mother would never seek her daughter in the oven had not herself been there first" (Clarke). The meaning is much the same as that of the proverb *Sás a dhéanta chuimhnig air, i.e.* By thinking of such a thing you show that you are capable of doing it yourself.

367. Ní féidhir fhagháil ón gcat acht a chroiceann.

"You can have no more of a cat than her skin." Well known to-day. Occurs in the above form in 'Stair Éamuinn Uí Chléire,' l. 893; and as *Ní féidir dho bhaint de'n chat acht a*

chroiceann in 'Madhm an Árda Bhig' (GJ. 172, p. 703b).

368. Is iasg a gcasann 'na líon.

"All is fish that comes to his net." In Irish I have met this (which is rather a proverbial phrase than a proverb) only in Ó Neachtain's Stair É. Uí Chléire (l. 582): *Ba hiasg a gcasfadh* ✱ [leg. *gcasadh*] *ionna líon.* Scottish has *A h-uile rud a théid 's an lìon 's iasg e.*

369. Creidthe gníomh roimh chaint is chairt.

'An act is to be believed before (mere) talk and writing,'—a line of the poem 'Mosgail do mhisneach, a Bhanbha' (P. Haiceud, p. 91). In English: "Actions speak louder than words." Cf. *Gníomh a chruthuigheas*, 'Action proves,' Connacht; and *An focal mór agus an gníomh beag*, 'Great talk and little action' (O'Leary's Aesop, i. 36). The following lines from 'An Sutach 's a Mháthair' may also be compared:

Is go bhfeicimse sagairt 'na seasamh san éide,
A ngníomh is a dteagasg seacht n-acra ó chéile.

✱ Scottish has *Cha bhriathar a dhearbhas ach gnìomh* (Cameron).

IV.

PROVERBIAL PHRASES IN IRISH LITERATURE

Besides proverbs of the above type, which form complete sentences in themselves, we have in Irish, as in every other language, a large number of stock-phrases, that is to say, expressions (usually metaphorical) which are constantly used with reference to a given set of circumstances. Such phrases are called *canúiní* in the Irish of West Kerry, as distinguished from *seanfhocail*, 'proverbs,' and in English we may call them 'proverbial phrases.'* I give a few examples from current Irish by way of illustration:—

Ag dul ó thig an diabhail go tig an deamhain, "out of the frying-pan into the fire." Another Irish equivalent is *ag dul as an ndeatach isteach sa teine* (O'Leary); in Ulster, *as a' choire insa' teinidh* (MacAdam).

Ag tochrais ar a cheirtlín féin, "bringing grist to his own mill."

Do chuirfeá an dubh 'na gheal orm, 'you would persuade me that black was white'; cf. Begly 112b.

Tá mo phort seinnte, 'I am done for.'

* In the older literature no distinction is made between proverbs and proverbial phrases, the terms *derbáruse*, *senbriathar*, and *seanfhocal* being applied equally to both

Tá a chóta bán déanta, or *Tá cos 'na sgiain anois*, 'His fortune is made.'

Tá do chuid is do chlú agat, "You hae your meat and your meuse" (N.E.), *i.e.* You have the credit of having offered a thing, with no cost to yourself (the offer not having been accepted). In Ulster: *Tá do chuid is da bhuidhcachas agat* (MacAdam). In Scottish *Tha do chuid 's do thàing agad* (Cameron).

Chomh marbh le hArt, "as dead as a doornail."

Asachán an chiotail leis an gcorcán, "the pot calling the kettle black."

Trosgadh an chait cheanainn (*d'íosadh sé feóil is ní ólfadh sé bainne*), lit. 'the abstinence of the white-headed cat' (that refrained from milk but had no scruples about eating meat). Applied to hypocritical conduct.

Rith mhadra an dá cháis, lit. 'the running of the dog with the two cheeses' (which in his graspingness he tried to carry together). Ulster and Scotland substitute *fiadh* for *cáis;* thus *rith na con a ndéigh dá fhiadh*, 'the running of the hound after two deer,' MacAdam 438; *ruith chain an dá fhéidh*, Sc. (in the Edinb. MS., *ruich chon an da fhiadh*).

Alp i mbéal an mhadaidh (MacAdam), "a sop to Cerberus."

Paidir chapaill, 'a long-winded story.' In Galway *sgéal an ghamhna bhuidhe* means the same thing.

Sgéal an chaipín deirg, 'an oft-repeated tale.'

Of course the distinction between 'proverbs' and 'proverbial phrases' is not an absolutely

rigid one. A few of the 'proverbs' given above might more appropriately have been included in the present section (*e.g.* nos. 336, 340, 342, 368). Many proverbs may be used in an abbreviated form as proverbial phrases, while not infrequently the latter may be expanded and generalised so as to resemble proverbs. Thus *Is feárr ciall cheannaig ná dhá chéill a múintear*, "Bought wit is best," is a proverb but *ciall cheannaig*, 'bought wit,' by itself is a proverbial phrase. So *Bíonn gach éinne ag tarrac uisge chun a mhuilinn féin*, "Every miller draws water to his own mill," may be regarded as a proverb; but when we say of some individual *Bhí sé ag tarrac uisge chun a mhuilinn féin sa ghnó* (cf. Séadna 190), we are employing portion of the proverb as a proverbial phrase.

Occasionally, too, proverbs become worn down to phrases without being abbreviated; see two examples discussed under no. 349.

Proverbial phrases are very common in our older literature, just as, for that matter, they are in the Irish of to-day. But is is remarkable that very few of the proverbial phrases formerly employed have survived in current Irish. Some of them, in fact, would, even if modernised in form, convey no meaning nowadays,—much as in English such an expression as "Hobson's choice" would to-day be meaningless if it had long since dropped out of English speech and literature and if the story that gave rise to it had been forgotten. A few examples of such obsolete proverbial phrases may be given here: *ēcht Moīle Moire*, 'Maolmhuire's exploit,' Trip. Life 88 (referred to as a *derbáruscc.*) *Biad ō*

beōlu, 'food from lips,' Aisl. Meic Conglinne 65 (a *senbriathar*). *Codlud Faillēin i ndūn Nāis*, 'Faillén's sleep in the fort of Naas,' Lis. Lives 405 (an *aithiusc mbrēithre*). *Tarraid Aincél tú*, 'Aincél (*i.e.* Misfortune) has visited thee,' Ac. Sen. 6214 (a *senfhocal*). *Lámh c[h]lé Ultáin it aghaidh*, 'Ultán's right hand against thee,' I.T.S. xvi. 64 (a *senfhocal*). *Eire na caillighe don bhlonaic*, the hag's load of the lard,' Oss. Soc. v. 50.

Phrases such as these, however, are devoid of any save a lexicographical interest, and no further examples of them need be quoted here.

In the following pages I have confined myself to proverbial phrases the meaning of which is readily grasped, and even of these I give only a selection.

Proverbial phrases denoting hopeless impossibility, or great difficulty or danger, are very frequent in the older literature,—particularly in descriptions of fights. Often the idea is emphasised by grouping together a number of such phrases, as in the following quotations which may conveniently be given here. At the end of the quotations the commonest of these phrases are excerpted and numbered 370-382:—

Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh, p. 162 (referred to below as "C.G.":—(1) *Ba snām in n-agaid srotha*, (2) *ba hesargain darach du dorndaib*, (3) *ba fāl re mbrūchtud robarta*, (4) *ba gat im ganem no im grian*, (5) *ba dornd i ngae ngrēni*, —*triall frestail catha no comlaind dōib*.

Togail Troi (Calcutta, 1882), ll. 628 ff. ("T.T."—*Ba dímáin tra dáibsium anīscin, ar*

(1) *ba gat in ganem* 7 (2) *ba snām i n-agaid srotha*, (3) *ba lua fri borb* 7 (4) *ba bēim cind fri hall*, 7 (5) *bá saiget i coirthi —dóib ammus catha do thabairt ar trenmíliḋ in talman .i. ar Hercoil.*

Tór. Shaidhbhe (cf. 23 L 39, p. 311; very corrupt text in 'Gadaidhe Géar na Geamh-oidhche,' p. 32).—(1) *Is tuargain darach do dhóirne, nó* (2) *snámh i n-aghaidh easa, nó* (3) *cur gaid um ghainimh, nó* (4) *toirmeasg mara dhíleann, nó* (5) *dréim i n-aghaidh gaoithe, nó* (6) *tairgsin an talamh do chur druim tar ais—díbhse an siobhal sin do dhéanamh.*

Eachtra Chloinne Ríogh na hIoruaidhe (I.T.S. i.), p. 86 ("Cl. R.I.").—(1) *Is snámh i n-aghaidh easa, no* (2) *gad um ghaineamh, no* (3) *tuargan darach de dhornaibh, no* (4) *fadóghadh teineadh fa inbhear, no* (5) *is glac um ghath gréine, no* (6) *teas i gceann fiuchtha, no* (7) *is léim 'na leabuidh ar leómhan, dul i gceann mhic Rígh na Sorcha.*

Irish Aeneid, ll. 750 ff. ("Aen.").—*Nī bern baegail in laech fuil and .i. Aenias, uair* (1) *is lām a nead nathrach*, (2) *is lua brot* 7 (3) *lēm chindh* [leg. *béim cind*] *fri hall*, (4) is *cuindchidh ugra* 7 *gledin gaiscid fair*, 7 (5) *as fearg nathrach ima ned aigi*, 7 *is nert leomain, is bruth mīlead, is gal curadh, is lāmach laech lais.*

Cath Catharda, ll. 4395 ff. ("Cath.").—(1) *Is techt tar aicned immorro. ocus* (2) *is feidm os nirt, ocus* (3) *as onfaisi occiain, ocus* (4) *as iarraidh fhorais i fudomain, ocus* (5) *dēcsin radhairc ir-reodoirc*[*h*]*e, ocus* (6) *as gabāil re muir lāin icc līnadh, ocus* (7) *as triall ēiccne for airdrīgh, ocus* (8) *as techt i cath gan congaibh* [*airm*], *ocus* (9) *as seoladh ind agaidh gaeithe,*

ocus (10) *as cuingidh freabt*[*h*]*a i fritagaidh ēcca, ocus* (11) *as āirem ar immatt ēccintech—d'oenduine isin domun fōbairt ait*[*h*]*risi no aissnēisin for cathugud in laī sin.*

Eachtra Lomnochtáin, p. 23 ("Lom."),—(1) *Is tuargain darach de dhornaibh, nó* (2) *snámh i n-aghaidh easa, nó* (3) *cur gaid um ghainimh, dul chum teaghlaigh m' athar-sa.*

In Aislinge Meic Conglinne, pp. 71-73 ("Aisl. M. C.") there is a long list of this kind in which some 45 different things which it would be vain or foolish to attempt are enumerated. Most of these sayings, however, are not of common occurrence. One of them has already been referred to (no. 149 *supra*); references to a few of the others will be found below.

370. snámh i n-aghaidh easa.

'Swimming against a waterfall,'—Tór. Sh. (2); Cl. R.I. (1); Lom. (2); Dnl. Mac Bruaideadha in 23 L 17, fo. 28a. With *srotha*, 'stream' (for *easa*),—C.G. (1); T.T. (2). So *snámh i n-aghaidh tréan-tuile*, Gadelica i. 240. Very similar is *snām mara mór-thonnaig*, 'swimming the mighty-waved sea,' B. of Magh Rath, p. 172. *Ucht ra mór-dīlind*, 'breasting a great flood,' C. R. Ríg, p. 46. *Onfaisi occiain*, Cath. (3), seems to mean 'immersing oneself in the ocean'; so *onfuise* (sic leg.) *aigéin* in poem by Baothghalach MacAodhagáin, 'Contention' p 216, st. 7.

371. cur gaid um ghainimh.

'Putting a withe around sand,'—T.T. (1);

Tór. Sh. (3); Cl. R.I.; Lom. (3); Gadelica i. 240. Also formerly *gat im ganem nó im grian* ('gravel'), cf. C.G. (4); TBC. 4057; Aisl. M.C. 71 (with *gual*, 'charcoal,' for *grian*). Compare the English "a rope of sand."

372. tuargain darach de dhoirnibh.

'Beating an oak with one's fists,'—Tór. Sh. (1); Cl. R.I. (3); Lom. (1). Var. (for *tuargain*) *esorcu*, Aisl. M.C. 71 and note, or *esargain*, C.G. (2).

373. "béim cind fri hall."

'Striking one's head against a rock,' "knocking one's head against a stone wall,"—T.T. (4); Aen. (3). So *essarcain cind fri hallib*, C. R. Ríg 46.

374. "saiget i coirthi."

'Shooting an arrow at a pillar-stone,'—T.T. (5); Aisl. M.C. 71; C. R. Ríg 46.

375. glac um gha gréine.

'Grasping at a sunbeam,'—Cl. R.I. (5). So *dornd i ngae ngréni*, C.G. (5). Similarly *dorn im dhiaidh*, 'grasping at smoke,' B. Shuibhne 54; O'Dav. 1586. *Dorn im cheó*, King and Hermit, p. 29.

376. "fál re mbrúchtud robarta."

'A wall against the onrush of the flood-tide,' C.G. (3). Cf. *gabáil re muir láin icc línadh*,

'resisting a full sea in flood,' Cath. (6); *toirmcasg mara díleann*, Tór. Sh. (4); and *fál buinne dá chor le cuan* (with a variant *cosg do chur ris an mhuir mhōir*), Dánfhocail 89.

377. fadúdh teine fá loch.

'Kindling a fire under a lake,' with variants *shrúill* and *inbhear* (for *loch*),—Dánfhocail 70, 89; Cl. R.I. (4).

378. seóladh i n-aghaidh gaoithe.

'Sailing against the wind,'—cf. Cath. (9). So *dréim i n-aghaidh gaoithe*, Tór Sh. (5).

379. lámh i nead nathrach.

'Putting one's hand into an adder's nest,'—cf. Aen. (1); Tog. Troi (Calcutta, 1882), l. 608; Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh, I.T.S. xx. p. 18. So. *ropsat láma in-net nathrach*, RC. xiii. 92 (Bóroma). See next phrase, and cf. *fcarg nathrach ima ned*, Aen. (5).

380. ceann i gcuithe leomhan.

Thus in B. Aodha Ruaidh, p. 268: *Ro badh cenn i ccuithe leomhan nó lāmh i nead gríbhe* (sic leg.) *a ionnsoigeadh itir*, 'To attack him was like putting one's head into a lion's den, or one's hand into a griffin's nest.' So *nead grībhe 7 fochla leomhain*, 'griffin's nest and lion's den,' is applied to a formidable army, *ibid.* pp. 156, 166. Cf. Cl. R.I. (7).

381. "lua fri borb."

'A kick against a boor,'—T.T. (3). But the original form was probably *lua fri brot*, 'kicking against a goad,' as the *lua brot* of Aen. (2) suggests. Compare "contra stimulum calcitrare," "to kick against the pricks," Acts ix. 5. Heywood combines this with versions of 370 and 373:

"Foly it is to spourne against a pricke,
To stryue against the streme, to winche or kicke
Against the hard wall."

382. "athchungid ugra."

'Seeking strife,' "looking for trouble,"—Tog. Troi (Calcutta, 1882, l. 609). So *cuindchidh ugra*, Aen. (4).

383. a' taomadh na mara le cliabh.

'Draining out the sea by means of a basket,' —Scottish (Cameron). Cf. Merriman's Cúirt, ll. 740-742: *ól na Sionainne tirim nó a taosgadh*, etc.

384. "robad do throich."

'Giving a warning to one who is doomed,' *i.e.* a futile task,—Aisl. M. C. 71. *Ba rabhadh do throich* (sic leg.) *a dteagasg*, 'it was vain to warn them,' Cath Muighe Léana 18. Cf. *acht cid comrād re carraig comairli do t[h]roich rē na thiugh-ba*, 'though to give advice to a doomed man before his death is like talking to a rock,' B. of Magh Rath 170.

385. "banna ria frais."

'A drop before a shower,' *i.e.* a portent of greater things to come,—Fled Bricrend (I.T.S. ii. 64); Proc. R.I.A. 1895, p. 548. So *bainne ré bhfhrais* in poem by Giollabrighde Mac Conmidhe, Misc. Celtic Soc. p. 172. *Mar bhraon dá bhfearthair ria bhfrais*, i.e. 'as the first drop of rain that portends the storm,' Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh (I.T.S. xx. 92).

386. coim ria gcioth.

'A cloak before rain,' 'a shelter from the shower,' used to denote 'ease, comfort.' Thus: *Nír bho coim ria cciodh* (sic) *do Aodh Ua Domhnaill a ēlúdh*, B. Aodha Ruaidh, p. 16. *Ba coimm ria ccioth dósomh tocht isin ccarattradh sin*, F.M., 1599, p. 2140.

387. "tochuiriuth drochcarat."

Thus in Toch. Étaíne (Ir. Tex. i. 120): *Nī ba tochuiriuth drocharat det-si ón aní sein*, i.e. 'It is no evil-minded friend whom you thus invite,' spoken by Eochaid to Étaín. Another version of Eochaid's words is given in Br. Dá Derga (§2): *Nī ba taig drochcarad hi cēin dait ēm*, 'No seeking of an ill friend afar shall be thine' (Stokes).

388. sliocht sionnaigh ar oighreóig.

'The track of a fox on ice.' Thus in B. Aodha Ruaidh, p. 80: *Nīr bho sliocht siondaig for oighreog eng 7 foillecht an chreach-s[h]lōigh*, *i.e.* It was easy to find the track of the ravaging army.

389. fáilte carad um chuirm.

'The welcome of friends at a feast.' Thus in E. Cl. Rígh na hIoruaidhe (I.T.S. i. 188): *Níor bh' f[h]áilte carad um chuirm fáilte na deise deagh-laoch sin d'á chéile,* i.e. their meeting was anything but friendly. Compare in Muc Mic Dá-thó, *Nīptar aigthe carat im fhleid* (Ir. T. i. 99).

390. taobh le toll-airbhe.

'Trusting to a broken fence,' (*i.e.* "a broken reed"),—B. of Magh Rath 126 (*taeb re tollairbe*). The Four Masters compare the people of Tír-chonaill after the death of their prince, Conn Ó Domhnaill, in 1583 to a corn-field with a broken fence (*gort taobh le tollairbhe*). Other exx. are: *Damh ní taobh re tollairbhe,* Timth. viii. 46; *ní taobh tollairbhe taobh ruinn,* Tadhg mac Dáire (I.T.S. xx. 98). Dinneen (s.v. *taobhaim*) gives *taobhadh le tollaire* as current in Donegal.

391. "boegal i n-écmais omain."

'Danger without fear,' *i.e.* foolish confidence in the face of danger,—PH. 3010.

392. cuid daimh d'eadradh.

'The ox's part in milking-time,' *i.e.* the rôle of an idle spectator,—Tadhg mac Dáire (I.T.S. xx. 128). The Ulster *cuid an tsearraigh de'n chliath* (MacAdam 80; also in Scottish), lit. 'the foal's share of the harrow,' has just the same meaning.

* cf. NGP 178: Faothachadh gille 'ghobha (ghobhainn, Macintosh); bho na h-uird gus na builg.

393. cuid ghiolla an eich don gheirr-fhiadh.

'The horse-boy's share of the hare,' *i.e.* a very small share,—Dánta Grádha, p. 42.

394. déirc i soightheach lán.

'Alms bestowed on a full vessel,' *i.e.* unrequited effort,—Dánta Grádha, p. 29. So *déirc an mháilín láin*, Bourke's Grammar, p. 281; *déirce do'n phucán lán*, Morris 1015.

* 395. fuaradh ghiolla an ghabhann.

'The rest that the smith's working-boy gets,' *i.e.* no real rest but merely a change from one kind of work to another,—TBg. 174 (where Keating explains the phrase). MacAdam (67) has recorded an Ulster version: *Sgíste ghiolla an ghobha, ó na builg chun na hinneora.* n?

396. sop i n-ionad na sguaibe.

'A wisp in place of a broom,' *i.e.* a poor substitute. Well known to-day. There is a paraphrase in P. Haicéad (p. 4): *gé tláthshop scaipithe i malairt na scuaibe sinn.* A synonym
* is *an tsrathair i n-áit na diallaite*, 'the straddle in place of the saddle,' which is also found in
* Scottish (Cameron, p. 480). Compare *cloch i n-ionad uighe*, 'a stone in place of an egg,' used by Charles O'Conor of Belanagare in a note in YBL. (p. 170a), and also known in Ulster (MacAdam) and in Scotland.

397. coigeal i láimh óinsighe.

'A distaff in the hand of a fool.' Thus in 23 M 3, p. 28 (Maghnus Ó Domhnaill): *Nīr chogél a lāimh ōinsighe sin*, i.e. he showed himself an adept at it. A current Ulster form is *cuigeál i ndorn na hamaidighe*, Morris 1158. Scottish has *claidheamh an làimh amadain is slachdan an làimh òinsigh*, 'a sword in the hand of a male fool, and a beetle in the hand of a woman-fool.'

398. uisge do loch.

Thus in LU. Irish Nennius (ed. Hogan, p. 15): *Ferta tra Pātraic do innisin dúibsi, a fhiru Hērend, is usce dó loch insin*, 'To relate to you, men of Ireland, the miracles of St. Patrick is like bringing water to a lake,' *i.e.* is a needless task. Scottish has (inter alia): *B'e sin an salann 'g a chur 's a' mhuir*, 'That were (like) putting salt in the sea.' Welsh has similarly *cludo heli i'r môr*, 'to carry salt-water to the sea.' These are all equivalent to the English "carrying coals to Newcastle."

399. troid bodaigh le sluagh.

'A churl's fight against an army,' *i.e.* a foolish and futile effort,—Bourke's Grammar, p. 300. A literary instance occurs in an anonymous poem in 23 D 4, p. 133: *Gan éag duit dā ttairgin[n]si ⁊ is troid bhodaigh re ceithrinn.* The Scottish form resembles the latter: *trod a' bhodaich ris a' cheathairn* (Nicolson; also Edinb. MS.).

(X) cf. Rel. Celt. II. 324 : Mar urchair an Daill na ndabhach (sic leg.)
Sior thilgeann 's gun aon din gamas.

Very similar is the phrase *imirt bhodaigh is mhacaoimh*, 'the play of a churl with a young warrior,' used in the literature in the sense of 'a one-sided game,' 'an uneven contest' (23 D 4, p. 133; St. A. iv. 3, p. 801). Compare also *gleic leinibh is laoich luinn*, 'a child's contest with a doughty warrior,' Anluan Mac Aodhagáin, I.T.S. xxi. 224.

400. mic-tíre i gcroicnibh caorach.

"Wolves in sheep's clothing" (cf. Matt. vii. 15),—Peadar Ó Doirnín, GJ. 70, p. 156. Earlier in a poem in LB.: *Bid fóel i craicend choerech*, GJ. 45, p. 194. A current Munster form is *machtíre i gcroiceann na fóisge*; a variant (GJ. 44, p. 192) has *madadh ruadh*, 'fox,' for *machtíre*, 'wolf.'

401. urchar an daill fa'n dabhach.

'The blind man's shot at the vat,' *i.e.* a random shot,—given by MacAdam for Ulster. The
* Scottish form is similar: *urchair an doill mu'n dabhaich* (Edinb. MS., and Nicolson). In a poem by Diarmaid mac Sheáin Bhuidhe the line occurs (cf. ed. Torna, p. 43): *Níor bh' urchar daill fá aill dam tigheacht chútha*, i.e. it was no mistake on my part to visit them; I was sure to be repaid for my trouble. Here *fá aill* seems to be a corrupted form of *fá dhaibhich*. (X)

402. ar a chliathaibh fis.

Keating in his 'Forus Feasa' (ii. pp. 348-350)

says that, when all other means of divination failed them, the druids used to wrap themselves in fresh bulls' hides which they had previously spread on wattles of the quicken-tree; hence, he adds, anyone who does his utmost to get information is proverbially said to go 'on his wattles of knowledge' (*ar a chliathaibh fis*). The phrase occurs twice in the 'Contention of the Bards,' viz., *codail ar do chliathaibh fis*, Fearfeasa Ó'n Cháinte (p. 108); and *ar ndul dó ar a chliathaibh fis*, R. Mac Artúir (p. 158). It is now obsolete.

403. caith agus cosain iad.*

'Spend them and defend them,'—said to a ruler with reference to his subjects, 'Me Guidhir Fhearmanach,' p. 58. So the Four Masters (p. 735), in recording the death of Pilip Mág Uidhir in 1395, speak of him as *fer caithme 7 chosanta* [leg. *cosanta*] *a chrīche*. In the Battle of Magh Léana (p. 106) it is said of Conn Céadchathach with reference to Ireland: *As é baránta as fearr dhá caitheamh agas dhá cosnamh é*. English writers of Elizabeth's time make reference to the phrase. Thus Robert Payne in his 'Brife Description of Ireland' (printed in 1590; reprinted in the Ir. Arch. Soc. vol. for 1841) says: "They haue a common saying which I am perswaded they speake unfeinedly, which is, 'Defend me and spend me'; meaning from the oppression of the worser sorte of our countriemen." And a few years later Spenser, in his 'View of the State of Ireland,' says: "They (the Irish) were never

* cf. Leabhar Cloinne Hodha Buidhe, p. 35: agus do chaith agus do chosain an tír.

wont, and yet are loth, to yield any certain rent, but only spendings; for their common saying is, 'Spend me and defend me.'"

404. duine i n-aghaidh an tsaoghail.

'One man against the world.' Cf. "Athanasius contra mundum." The above is the current form; other versions were very common in the literature of a few centuries ago. Thus: *Ná bí 't aon i n-aghaidh cháich*, Dánfhocail 185. *(Tú) it aon i n-aghaidh mór-shluaigh*, R. Mac Artúir in the 'Contention' (I.T.S. xx. p. 152, st. 45). *Tú it aon i n-aghaidh pobuil*, Aodh Ó Domhnaill in the same (p. 136, st. 7). *'N-a aon i n-ag[h]aidh pobuil*, Eochaidh Ó Heoghusa (Ir. Monthly, 1920, p. 595). *'S mé an t-aon i n-aghaidh phobail* in an anonymous poem (cf. 23 D 4, p. 133).

405. cúram Una.

'Una's solicitude.' Applied to the occupation of a busybody. Well known to-day; often with the explanatory addition of *cúram gan chion*, 'solicitude without affection.' An instance occurs in a Connacht quatrain in 23 Q 18, p. 406 (transcribed *circ.* 1818): *Más ort atā cúram uághna* (sic), *go ma fada búan do ghallra.*

406. muc i mála.

"A pig in a poke." Current to-day, and probably of English origin. It occurs thus in

O'Molloy's 'Lucerna Fidelium' (1676), p. 313: *Ní chean[n]uighimne pigín a māladh.*

407. ag marbhadh mada mhairbh.

'Killing a dead dog,' *i.e.* "flogging a dead horse," or "pouring water on a drowned rat," —Luc. Fid., p. 333. Morris (1165) gives a S.-E. Ulster version: *caitheamh cloch ar mhadadh marbh*, 'throwing stones on a dead dog.'

408. cleamhnas an charn-aoiligh, agus cáirdeas críostaidhe i bhfad amach.

'Marriage at the dung-heap, and sponsorship far away,' *i.e.* 'It is best to marry a neighbour and to have one's god-parents far away,'—Clare (cf. GJ. 188, p. 136). A Derry version is very similar (Morris 138). As early as the fourteenth century Gofraidh Fionn alludes to it as an established maxim; his version is *Cleamhnas ar deis duine féin, | is altrannas i n-imgéin*, 'Marrying near and fosterage afar' (Ir. Monthly, 1919, p. 5). Scottish has *Pòsadh thar na h-innearach, 'us goisteacht thar muir*, 'Marriage o'er the midden, sponsorship o'er sea.' There are other Scottish versions in which 'courting' takes the place of 'sponsorship' (Nicolson 351; Cameron 505); some such substitution was to be expected when once the old custom of fosterage had fallen into disuse. N.E. has "Better marry ower the midden than ower the muir (*i.e.* moor)," which would seem to have been borrowed from Scot-

tish; though Nicolson quotes a proverb from Cheshire which is very similar.

409. Oisín d' éis na Féine.

'Oisín after the Fian,' applied to a solitary survivor of former days, as Oisín was supposed to have survived all his comrades and to have lived down to St. Patrick's time. Compare Diarmaid's words to Oisín in Tór. Dhiarmada agus Ghráinne (Oss. Soc. iii. 190): *Biairse féin, a Oisín, ad challaire d'éis na Féinne.* The phrase is a common one in modern Irish; thus Seán Ó Conaill, in his 'Tuireamh na hÉireann,' applies it to Sir Cahir O'Doherty whose tardy rebellion took place in 1608: *Ó Dochartaigh ina Oisín d'éis na Féine, | do thógaibh cogadh nár chosain ar aon-chor.* Diarmaid mac Sheáin Buidhe writes: *Im Oisín d'éis na Féinne is truagh mar táim* (p. 61). Aindrias Mac Cruitín in his address to Donn similarly compares himself:

Mar Oisín ag osnaighe 's ag caoineadh
D'éis na Féine go léir dhul fá líoga.

The phrase has also been preserved in Scottish: *mar Oisean an déigh na Fèinne.*

410. sgaradh cinn le colainn.

Thus in Eachtra Chonaill Ghulban: *Ba sgaradh cinn fria colainn an sgaradh sin,* 'That parting was as the parting of head from body,' 23 M 10, p. 117. A little later in the same text this is amplified in verse as follows (cf. *ibid.* p. 118):

Mo sgaradh-sa is Conall caomh
is sgaradh eilit fri a laogh,
sgaradh mic is a mháthar,
sgaradh deise dearbhráthar.

Is sgaradh lachan fri linn,
sgaradh cuirp is a chaoimh-chinn,
dul uaidsi, a Chonaill chliaraigh
gus an mBeirbhe mbánsgiathaigh.

i.e. our parting is as the parting of a hind from its fawn, or of a boy from his mother, or the parting of two brothers, or the parting of a duck from the lake, or of the body from the head. Cf. *As scarudh cuirp re cride | damh deghail rem dherbhfine*, Beatha Coluimb Chille, p. 192. With *sgaradh lachan fri linn* cf. the paraphrase *sgaradh eóin re fíoruisge*, Maghnus Ó Domhnaill, Dánta Grádha p. 2.

The first of the two quatrains quoted above is closely paralleled in the Battle of Magh Rath, p. 134, with the substitution of *debaid*, 'strife,' for *sgaradh*, 'parting':

Mo debaid is Congail Claen
is debaid ellti re laeg,
debaid mic is a māthar,
is troid desi dearbrāthar.

411. fáilte Uí Cheallaigh.

'O'Kelly's welcome,' *i.e.* a very hearty welcome,—D. Ó Bruadair iii. 186; Aogán Ó Raithile (2nd. edn., p. 44). It is probable that (as Father MacErlean suggests) this phrase had its origin in the remarkable invitation extended to all the poets, musicians, etc., of Ireland by

Uilliam Ó Ceallaigh at Christmastide, 1351 (see Ériu, v. 50). The phrase is still current (Kerry).

Other phrases introducing surnames are *tabhartas Uí Bhriain ('s a dhá shúil 'na dhiaidh)*, 'O'Brien's gift,' *i.e.* one very grudgingly given; and *bodhaire Mhic Mhathamhna*, 'MacMahon's deafness,' *i.e.* deafness which is merely feigned (Clare, GJ. 186, p. 105). In West Cork *bodhaire Uí Laoghaire*, 'O'Leary's deafness' (cf. Mion-chaint ii. 36) is used with the same meaning as the latter.

412. fál ar an ngort tar éis na foghla.

'Fencing a field after the plunder has been committed,' *i.e.* "locking the stable-door when the steed has been stolen." Still current, as is also a variant *fál an bhodaig d'éis na foghla*. There is a literary allusion to this phrase in the first line of an anonymous religious poem: *Fál iar bhfoghail don othar an fhaoisidin* (cf. H. 5. 3, p. 62). Cf. *'Sé dúnadh an dorais é tar éis na foghla*, in a Munster folk-song (An tAithriseóir i. 9).

413. píobaire an aon-phuirt.

'A piper who has only one tune.' Still current, both in Ireland and in Scotland. There is a literary instance in a poem by Eoghan Ó Donnaoile: *Ní mé píobaire an éan-phuirt* (cf. Reliq. Celt. ii. 294).

414. ag lorg gadhair is gan fios a dhatha aige.

'(A man) looking for a dog although he doesn't know the dog's colour.' Well-known to-day. Occurs in Tomás Ó Caiside's autobiography: *ag iarraidh mo ghadhair 's gan fios a dhath agam* (cf. 23 O 35, p. 60).

As may be inferred from some of the above phrases, Irish often expresses as a metaphor what other languages would rather express as a simile. Similes, however, are also found in Irish. I give here a few examples of stereotyped similes (which may be looked upon as proverbial phrases) which are frequently used in the literature in describing a hero's (or an army's) victorious onrush through opposing forces:

415. amhail seabhac tré mhin-éanaibh.

'Like a hawk through small birds.'

416. amhail faolchú fá thréad caorach.

'Like a wolf through a flock of sheep.'

417. amhail míol mór tré mhin-iasgaibh.

'Like a whale through small fishes.'

Two or more of these similes are frequently used together, hence it is convenient to bring examples of all three together here. An early instance of 412 is: *feib ras leíc seíg for mintu*, 'as the hawk attacks little birds, TBC., ed. Wind., 3792. No. 413 is seen in *Imsái Conchobar chucu amal fáel fó chaīrib*, Toch. Ferbe (Ir.

T. iii. 516), and in *Rodn-imbeir forru amal fóelaid etir cháirchu*, Togail Troí (Ir. T. ii. 1433). In Eachtra Chonaill Ghulbain we have *Téid fútha amhail seabhac tre mhin-éanaibh* (cf. 23 M 10, p. 31) and *Téid fútha, tríotha is tarsa amhail bleidhmhíol fo mhin-iasgaibh* (cf. ibid. 68). In Eachtra Lomnochtáin: *Do ghabhodar Fianna Eireann dá leadradh amhail faolchonaibh ocracha craos-sgaoilte* [leg. *craos-osgailte*] *tré mhin-tréadaibh caorach, nó amhail míol mór tré mhin-iasgaibh, nó amhail seabhac tré ealtain de mhin-éanaibh* (p. 34; cf. also ibid. 66). In some Munster folk-tales we find these similes still living, thus: *Déanan Diarmaid fútha 7 gabhan tríotha sabhall 7 anall, amhail seabhac tré sgata mion-éan, nó madadh allta tré treabha* (sic) *caorach*, Oir. Proc. 1898, p. 66; and *Dhein sé fútha mar dheunfadh seabhac fé sgata mion-eun lá Márta*, in a Kerry version of 'Eachtra Chonaill Ghulban,' An Lóchrann, Márta, 1911.

418. amhail buinne ndíleann a hucht airdshléibhe.

'Like a flood rushing down from a high mountain,'—Conall Gulban (cf. 23 M 10, p. 98). So *Dó chúaidh fúthu 7 tríthu 7 tarsa mur dam ndían ndásachtach arna drochbúalad, nō mur leoman arna chrád fána chuilēnaib, nō mur buinni ndían ndílinn scēithes a hucht airdslébe i n-aimsir thuili brisis 7 minaighes gach nī gusa roichend*, Fianaigecht p. 94. *Atraachtatar Lagin . . . amal buinne dīlend do aillib*, Bóroma (RC. xiii. 90). *Bloisgbhēim buinne dīlionn do ucht airdshléibhe*, B. Shuibhne, 124.

V.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

There are in early Irish literature a number of collections of precepts and wise sayings attributed to certain characters of history or legend who had obtained a reputation for wisdom. These are: (1) *Audacht* (or *Auraicept*) *Moraind*, 'the Testament of Morann,' supposed to have been King of Ireland, A.D. 15-36*; (2) *Tecosca Cormaic*, 'the Instructions of Cormac' mac Airt, said to have been King of Ireland in the third century; (3) *Senbriathra Fíthail*, 'the Proverbs of Fíthal' (or Fítheal), lawgiver to King Cormac mac Airt; and (4) *Briathra Flainn Fhína maic Ossu*, 'the Words of Flann Fína,' the name by which Aldfrid, son of King Oswy of Northumbria, was known in Ireland. In addition to these there is an equally old collection of Triads, or wise sayings arranged in groups of three, which has been edited by Kuno Meyer (Todd Lecture Series xiii., R.I.A.). All these have been quoted from above, particularly (3) and (4), which are to a large extent identical. But of the greater number of the sayings in these ancient compilations it may be said that there is no evidence that they ever

* This has been edited by Thurneysen, ZCP. xi. 56 ff. References to editions of the other texts will be found in Best's Bibliography, p. 263.

attained such a degree of popularity as would warrant our regarding them as proverbs.

Coming to modern times, we may begin with Begly's English-Irish Dictionary (Paris, 1732), which has often been quoted from *supra* (see nos. 30, 63, 115, 124, 128, 132, 194, 198, 223, 342, 365). A good number of English proverbs are given in this work of Begly's, but the Irish equivalents he sets after them are, as a rule, mere slavishly literal translations of the English. Occasionally, however, he gives (in addition, frequently, to a literal rendering) what appear to be genuine Irish proverbs or proverbial phrases. Besides most of those quoted above, the following seem to be genuinely Irish (I retain Begly's spelling):—

(1) *Deín fein do ghnódh, agus ith fēin do shudóg*, "Self do, self have," p. 600b.

(2) *Dlíghe comaoin cúiteadh*, and (3) *Ionnlaitt na lámha a chéile*, "Claw me, claw thee," 380a.

(4) *Is mein*[*i*]*c cealg a mbun na póige*, "Many do kiss the hands they wish to see cut off," 385a.

(5) *Ithigh greidhm greidhm oile*, "One shoulder of mutton draws down another," 607b.

(6) *Tuibhe na háthadh do chur ar an muillionn*, "To rob Peter to pay Paul," 584b. Literally, 'to put the thatch of the kiln on the
* mill.' Still preserved in Scottish: *tubhadh na h-àtha air a' mhuilinn;* in the Edinb. MS.,
* *tugha na háith ga chur air a' mhuilionn.* Nicolson quotes a N.E. form (probably borrowed from Sc.): "Tir the kiln to thack the mill."

(7) *Más ionmhuin an chráin, is ionmhuin an t-ál*, and (8) *Más ionmhuin leat mé, is ionmhuin mo réim*, "Love me, love my dog," 428b. There is a version of the former in Hardiman. Scottish has *Ma's toigh leat a'mhuc, is toigh leat a h-àl* (Cameron). *

(9) *Mol an t-áth mur do gheabhair é*, "Never praise a ford till you go over," 229a. Nowadays usually *Moladh gach éinne an t-ádh mar a gheóbhaidh*. * N.G.P 318

(10) *Más olc maol, is measa mullóg*, "There's not so bad a Jack but there's as bad a Jil," 339a. In F. Keane's collection (12 Q 13), *Ní measa maol ná maológ*. In Hardiman, *Ma's dona maol is measa maológ*. Cf. Morris 373.

(11) *Nïor éar cuire nach rachadh ar foghadh*, "He that will not when he may, when he fain would he shall have nay," 662a. Hardiman has *Nior toib* [leg. *theib* or *ob*] *cuire nach rachadh forfoidhe* [=*ar foighdhe*, 'begging'].

12) *Ní thig olc a ttír nach fearrde duine éigin*, "It is an ill wind that blows no body good," 662b. The current Galway and Donegal forms are nearly as in Begly. N&P 283

(13) *Bí an fhírinne searbh ar uairibh*, "All truths are not to be spoken at all times," 645a. Compare no. 52 supra. * v. N&P 354

(14) *Ní bhí deatach gan teinidh*, "Where there is smoke there is fire," 614a. Compare Ml. 40c 1 (Miss E. Knott). *An áit a mbíonn toit, bíonn teine*, Uls.

(15) *Cró roimh na harcuibh*, "You count your chickens before they are hatched," 297b. So *crodh* (leg. *cró*) *roimh an arc*, Hardiman. *Ná dean cró a roimhe na harcaibh*, 'Do not build

the sty before the litter comes,' MacAdam 34. *Ná bí ag deunamh na cróite roimis na torcaibh*, GJ. 79, p. 104 (Cork).

(16) *Ní hé an cnámh as áluinn, acht an fheoil ar a ghuala[i]nn*, "Fine feathers make fine birds," 212a (with *as* printed as *ás*).

(17) *An tí bhíos abhfad amuigh dearmudthar a chuid*, "Long absent, soon forgotten," 6b. Nowadays *An té bhíonn amuich, fuaruigheann a chuid.*

(18) *Tagradh ar sáilbhreith*, "To make almanacks for last year," 26a.

(19) *Ná déanadh dáil, 's bheith lom do ghnáth*, "Ever spare and ever bare," 53b. *Déanadh* is a misspelling for *déana* (=*din*).

(20) *Ní bhí sonus gan donus na órluighe fríd*, "No rose without a thorn," 587a. Cf. current versions, as a line of verse, in GJ. 192 p. 198 (Cork), Amhráin Chl. Gaedheal p. 108 l. 3 (Galway), Irisl. M. Nuadhad, 1912, p. 137 (Donegal). Cf. English "No joy without alloy," "No joy without annoy."

(21) *Uan ag múnadh méilídhe dá mhāthair*, "To teach one's grandam to give suck," 272b. Also in Hardiman. Well-known to-day.

The first printed collection of Irish proverbs appeared in Hardiman's Irish Minstrelsy, ii. pp. 397-408, published in 1831. It consists of 228 proverbs alphabetically arranged, "of different ages" and derived "from various sources both oral and written." But, although he does not specify it, Hardiman's main, if not his only, source must have been the MS. which is now Egerton 146 in the British Museum.

The 'Seanraite Éirionnacha' in this MS. are in the handwriting of Edward O'Reilly, the lexicographer; and from internal evidence Mr. Robin Flower (to whom I am indebted for information concerning the MS.) conjectures, with great probability, that the collection was originally made by Tadhg Ó Neachtain (*flor.* 1710-1749). The proverbs in this collection are on the whole less popular in character than those of O'Longan. Some of them have an archaic or literary flavour, while others seem somewhat artificial and translated literally from English. It is evident, too, that Hardiman did not always understand the proverbs he gives. Thus he prints one of them as *ocht n-amharc ocht ccuimhne*, as if it meant 'eight sights, eight memories'; but in this form the proverb is a bogus one, though Bourke and T. Ó Concheanainn have copied the blunder. The original reading was obviously *ós amharc, ós cuimhne*, i.e. 'out of sight, out of mind,' *ós* or *os* being Tadhg Ó Neachtain's spelling of *as* (see Gadelica i. 157 note, and also no. 76 *supra*).

It is remarkable how few of the proverbs in the present collection appear among those printed by Hardiman. Out of the 418 proverbs and proverbial phrases given above, Hardiman has versions of only 15, viz., nos. 36, 75, 105, 107, 114, 134, 136, 163, 169, 183, 224, 274, 291, 365 and 406.

Canon U. J. Bourke, in his Irish Grammar (pp. 275-302 of the edn. of 1879), has printed a collection of about 300 proverbs, derived partly from Hardiman, partly from "a manuscript collection of proverbs in the possession of Mr.

John O'Daly," and partly from "other sources."

In the following pages I give a list of the later collections of Irish proverbs, arranged according to the province of origin. In addition to those mentioned below collections of proverbs have occasionally appeared in Irish newspapers, and perhaps also in American newspapers or periodicals; but I have found it impossible to refer to these. Otherwise the lists below will, I hope, be found fairly complete. Many collections, big and small, appeared in the "Gaelic Journal" (referred to as "GJ."), particularly in vols. iv. v. and vi., when it was under the editorship of Father O'Growney, and in vols. xiv-xvi in which three Oireachtas prize-collections were published. As may be inferred from the details given below, the districts in which the best collecting work has been done are East Ulster, Galway, and West Munster. Figures in square brackets indicate the total number of proverbs.

MUNSTER

John O'Daly: 'Irish Language Miscellany,' 1876, pp. 89-98. 190 proverbs of "the peasantry"; doubtless mainly from O'Daly's native county of Waterford.

Pádraig Ó Laoghaire: (Eyeries, Béara, S.W. Cork): GJ. iv. pp. 41 [20], 79 [8]; v. p. 73 [13].

Daniel McCabe (Banteer, Cork): GJ. iv. p. 236 [34]; v. pp. 104, 125, 139 [86]; vii. p. 141 [21]. It is to be noted that the proverbs sent

to the GJ. by this contributor seem in some cases to have been borrowed from printed sources such as Hardiman and O'Daly.

William Long: (Ballyferriter, W. Kerry): GJ. v. pp. 21, 37, 61 [137].

P. McCarthy: GJ. v. pp. 172, 184, and vi. p. 9 [35]; Cork.

D. J. Galvin: GJ. vi. pp. 60, 78, 90 [47]; N Cork.

Seán Ó Briain: GJ. xvi. p. 88, continued in five following numbers and ending p. 165 [482]; Clare.

Seán Ó Cadhlaigh, and others: GJ. xvi. pp. 188, 197, 230 [278]; Cullin, Co. Cork.

Anonymous or smaller collections in GJ.: Vol. iv. p. 192, Cork [17; with 7 others of unspecified provenance]; p. 207, Kerry [8], and Cork [15]; p. 209, Cork [39], Waterford [1]; p. 236, Cork [19]; p. 247, Kerry [26], Cork [3], and Clare [5]. Vol. v. p. 13, Kerry [14], and Cork [18]; p. 38, Cork [13], Clare [16], and Kerry [6], with some others [13] of unspecified provenance; p. 88, Cork [30]; p. 140, Limerick [3] and Kerry [6]; p. 157, Clare [1] and Cork [8]. Vol. vi. p. 10, Munster [8]; p. 79, Cork [7].

Séamus Ó Dubhghaill: 'Leabhar Cainte,' *circ.* 1901, pp. 149-172; about 230 Kerry proverbs, together with a few Connacht ones. The same writer contributes 48 Kerry variants of Galway proverbs to GJ. xvi. p. 109.

Tadhg Ó Donnchadha: 'Seanfhocail na Mumhan. I.,' 1902; 570 proverbs, partly from John O'Daly's printed collection, partly from O'Longan's MS. collection (see above), and

partly taken down in Munster by the editor. Most, if not all, of these last had been already printed by him in GJ. vii. pp. 46, 57, 65, 104, where 180 Cork proverbs are given.

Canon O'Leary often quotes proverbs (W. Cork) at the end of the various fables in his 'Aesop a tháinig go hÉirinn' (I. and II.).

Rev. M. Sheehan: 'Sean-chaint na nDéise,' 1906, pp. 226-232, and 'Cnuasacht Trágha,' pp. 39-47; less than 100 proverbs from Ring, Co. Waterford.

Tomás Ó Caoimh: in 'An Lóchrann,' Oct. 1909; 30 proverbs from Waterford.

Gearóid Ó Nualláin: in 'Irisleabhar Muighe Nuadhad,' 1914, pp. 5-7; 61 proverbs from West Cork.

Seosamh Laoide: 'Tonn Tóime,' 1915, pp. 105-116; 250 proverbs from Kerry, mainly taken from printed sources including the William Long collection.

Pádraig Ó Siochfhradha ("An Seabhac") has been publishing in 'An Lóchrann'—beginning April, 1916, and continued, with some interruptions, in subsequent numbers—the largest collection of Munster proverbs yet made. His collection is evidently to some extent based on printed sources, but it includes many additional proverbs noted by himself.*

LEINSTER

An anonymous collection of 50 Kilkenny pro-

* It may not be amiss to add that, while most of the other collections mentioned in the Bibliography have been drawn on from time to time in the present volume, I have not made any use of this collection of An Seabhac's.

verbs is printed in 'Fáinne an Lae' of 1 July, 1899, p. 203.

For Meath I have noted in print only a solitary proverb, published in GJ. iv. p. 209.

CONNACHT

Domhnall Ó Fotharta: 'Siamsa an Gheimhridh,' 1892, pp. 99-102 [61].

J. J. Lyon: GJ. viii. p. 56 [14], and ix. p. 271 [20].

Anonymous or smaller collections in GJ.: Vol. iv. p. 210, Galway [4]; p. 248 [6]. Vol. v. p. 38, Galway [14]; p. 71, W. Connacht [56]; p. 139, Galway [11] and Mayo [3]. Vol. vi. p. 10 [6]; p. 91, Galway [8]; p. 123, Galway [11]. Vol. x. p. 30, Mayo [4].

Tomás Ó Concheanainn: 'Mion-chomhrádh,' 1904, pp. 141-161; about 264 proverbs, source unspecified; probably in part from Arran, but it is evident that the bulk of them are merely copied from Bourke.

Tomás Ó hEidhin: GJ. vols. xiv.-xvi., beginning no. 178, p. 827, and ending no. 184, p. 69; 653 proverbs from South Galway (Ardrahan district); but there are some duplications. As might be expected from their provenance, a large number of these proverbs are either identical with those current in Munster or differ from them only very slightly.

F. A. Fahy: in 'An Connachtach,' Oct. 1907, Jan., Feb., and March, 1908 [59].

Tomás Ó Máille: 'An Ghaoth Aniar,' 1920, pp. 31, 45, 60, 69, 79, 91 [32].

ULSTER

Robert MacAdam: in 'The Ulster Journal of Archæology,' 1858-1862, viz., vol. vi. pp. 172, 250; vol. vii. p. 278; vol. ix. p. 223 [600].

J. H. Lloyd: (Seosamh Laoide): GJ. iv. p. 248, Armagh [8]; vi. p. 184 and vii. p. 88, Monaghan [92]; xii. p. 154, Cavan [6].

John Ward: GJ. vii. p. 6, Donegal [59].

Conall Mag Fhionnlaoigh: GJ. viii. p. 13, Donegal [19].

E. C. Quiggin: 'A Dialect of Donegal,' 1906, p. 195, Donegal [24].

Énrí Ó Muirgheasa (H. Morris): GJ. viii. p. 177, Monaghan [76]. The same collector has published 'Seanfhocla Uladh,' 1907, containing 1,637 Ulster proverbs, and incorporating MacAdam's and the GJ. collections; the bulk of these proverbs are from S.-E. Ulster. He has published a supplementary list of 192 Ulster proverbs (mainly from Donegal) in the 'Journal of the Co. Louth Archæological Society,' iv. 258 (1917).

SCOTTISH

The collection and printing of proverbs in Gaelic Scotland was taken in hands at an earlier date than in Ireland, and we have still a good deal of lee-way to make up before we are on a level with our Scottish kinsmen. The collections of Nicolson and Cameron alone contain considerably over 4,000 different proverbs. The principal collections are:

Donald Mackintosh: 'Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases,' Edinburgh, 1785. Contains

1,305 proverbs and phrases, increased in the second edition (Edinburgh, 1819) to 1,538.

Alexander Nicolson: 'Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases,' Edinburgh, 1881. Contains over 3,900.* Incorporates Mackintosh's collection.

Alexander Cameron: in 'Reliquiæ Celticæ,' ii. pp. 475-507 (Inverness, 1894). Supplementary to Nicolson, and containing over 1,200 proverbs which are partly variants of those in Nicolson's work and partly additional proverbs not included by him.

There are numerous smaller collections, of which it will suffice to mention two here, viz. (1) the proverbs in Edinburgh MS. lxii., in the handwriting of Alasdair Mac Domhnaill, the poet; these have been printed in Reliquiæ Celticæ i. pp. 151-159. (2) 89 proverbs from Skye, printed by Chr. Sarauw in the Miscellany presented to Kuno Meyer, pp. 36 ff.

MANX

The earliest, and also the most reliable, authority for Manx proverbs is A. Cregeen, who in his 'Dictionary of the Manks Language' (Douglas, 1835) occasionally quotes them. Small collections have also been given in vols. xvi. and xxi. of the Manx Society (1849 and 1873), and in Moore's 'Folk-lore of the Isle of Man' (1891). All these have been incorporated by G. W. Wood in an article in 'Folk-lore,' v. pp.

* I have adopted Nicolson's estimates of the numbers of proverbs (including proverbial phrases) in his own collection and in that of Mackintosh.

229-274 (1894), where about 250 Manx proverbs are brought together. A later collection is 'Manx Proverbs and Sayings,' by S. Morrison and C. Roeder (1905); but many of the "proverbs" in this booklet seem obviously artificial, and English inspiration is manifest.

Two unpublished collections of proverbs among the MSS. of the Royal Irish Academy may be mentioned here, as occasional reference has been made to them in the present volume. The first is 3 C 21, which contains about 600 proverbs, the bulk of which evidently belong to South Connacht, though a few are from the literature (Four Masters principally). The compiler's name is not mentioned, nor is the date; but the collection was evidently made not earlier than 1864, for there are references to O'Donovan's Supplement to O'Reilly, which appeared in that year. The other collection consists of 123 proverbs in the MS. 12 Q 13, part iii., pp. 68-73, written by Francis Keane, a native of Co. Clare, in 1876.

ABBREVIATIONS, Etc.

References to Irish and Scottish sources of proverbs (*e.g.* MacAdam, Begly, Nicolson, etc.) will be readily understood on consulting the Bibliography. By "Edinb. MS." is meant the collection printed in 'Reliquiæ Celticæ,' i. pp. 151-159 (see p. 157, *supra*).

When no locality is assigned to current Irish proverbs quoted in illustration of the text, they may be assumed to be in use in Munster (particularly Kerry and Cork), though of course not necessarily confined to the South. When the proverbs or proverbial phrases to which the numbers are attached are Middle-Irish in form, the fact is generally indicated by the use of double inverted commas.

The following abbreviations will in general be familiar to students of Irish literature, but for some readers it may be convenient to have them explained here:—

ACL.	Archiv für Celtische Lexikographie.
Anecd.	Anecdota from Irish MSS.
FF.	Foras Feasa ar Éirinn.
FM.	Annals of the Four Masters.
GJ.	The Gaelic Journal (Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge).
Ir. T(ex).	Irische Texte.
I.T.S	Irish Texts Society.

LL.	Book of Leinster.
LU.	Leabhar na hUidhre.
O'Gr(ady) Cat.	S. H. O'Grady's Catalogue of Irish MSS. in the British Museum.
PH.	Passions and Homilies from the Leabhar Breac (ed Atkinson).
RC.	Revue Celtique.
SG.	Silva Gadelica (O'Grady).
TBC.	Táin Bó Cúalnge (ed. Windisch).
TBg.	Trí Bior-ghaoithe an Bháis (ed. Atkinson).
ZCP.	Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie.

"Sc." stands for Scottish, *i.e.* Scottish Gaelic. When a proverb is said to be "still preserved in Scottish," nothing more is to be inferred than that it is found in one or more of the Scottish collections. It is quite possible that some of the proverbs in, say, Mackintosh's collection may be nowhere in actual use to-day, seeing how the Scottish-speaking area has been narrowed during the last century. A similar remark applies to the Irish proverbs recorded by MacAdam in Ulster in the fifties of the last century; it is probable that Irish has now disappeared from most of the places where these proverbs were obtained.

English proverbs, as a rule, are indicated merely by the use of double inverted commas (" . . . "). "N.E." stands for Northern English, *i.e.* the English of Scotland. By "Skeat" is meant W. W. Skeat's 'Early Eng-

lish Proverbs' (Oxford, 1910). "Heywood" refers to John Heywood's collection of proverbs published in London in 1562 ('Three hundred Epigrammes upon three hundred Prouerbes,' and 'Dialogue . . . of the effectuall . . . Prouerbes in the Englishe Tounge . . . concernynge Maryages'). I have used the 1867 reprint of Heywood's work, but have usually modernised the spelling.

To obviate possible misunderstanding, it may not be amiss to state that by "West Cork" is meant the Ballingeary-Ballyvourney district in West Muskerry, Co. Cork.

INDICES

TEXTS QUOTED (PROSE)

[Only prose texts are included here, though occasionally the quotations are from verse inserted in the particular text. All the prose quotations are referred to in this Index, with the exception of those on pp. 127-8 and some eleven others (five of which are included in the Index of Authors). "Add." refers to the Additional Notes.]

Acallam na Senórach, 304, 307, 308.
Aided . . . see Oidheadh . . .
Aislinge Meic Conglinne, 149, 320, 371 ff., 384.
'Annals of the Four Masters,' 61, 284, 290, 291, 294, 298, 302, 303, 310, 313, 386, 403.
Audacht (*or* Auraicept) Moraind, 284, 293.
Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill [Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh], 133, 283, 287, 289, 291, 292, 293, 300, 313, 380, 386, 388, 390.
Betha Colaim Chille [Maghnus Ó Domhnaill], 298, 329, 330, 410.
Bóroma, 379, 418.
Briathra Flainn Fína, 3, 143, 281, 285, 286, 288, 326.
Brisleach Mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne (agus Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh), 134, 182, 333.

Bruidhean Bheag na hAlmhaine, 103.
————Chaorthainn, 133, 276, 335.
————Chéise Corainn, 274.
————Dá Derga, 387.
Buile Shuibhne, 61 Add., 182, 282 Add., 306, 375, 418.
Caithréim Ceallacháin Chaisil, 291.
————Conghail Chláiringnigh, 134, 283.
Cath Airtig, 285.
—— Catharda, 327, 370 ff.
—— Muighe Léana, 134 Add., 290, 384, 403.
—— Muighe Mucruimhe, 34, 334.
—— Muighe Rath, 178, 281, 282, 285, 286, 311, 322, 370, 384, 390, 410.
——Ruis na Ríg, 133, 287, 370, 373, 374.
Ceisneamh Inghine Ghuil, 275.
Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh, 289, 370 ff.
Compert Mongáin, 134, 283.
'Cormac's Glossary' (Sanas Cormaic), 304.
Eachtra Chloinne Ríogh na hIoruaidhe, 370 ff, 389.
————Chonaill Ghulban, 410, 415, 417, 418.
————Lomnochtáin, 333, 370 ff., 415-417.
————Thomáis Uí Chaiside, 57 Add., 312 Add., 345 Add., 414.
————Thoroilbh Mhic Stairn [Mícheál Coimín], 34.
Félire Oéngusso (notes to), 305.
'Fianaigecht,' 134, 418.
Fled Bricrend, 385.
Foghlaim Conchulainn, 276, 289.
Forus Feasa ar Éirinn [S. Céitinn], 292, 298, 321, 402.
Gallagher's 'Irish Sermons,' 344.

Irish versions of:
Aeneid, 134, 373 ff.
Cambrensis, 86, 296.
Fierabras, 274.
Nennius, 398
Tale of Troy, see Toghail Troí.
William of Palermo, 103 Add., 274 Add., 292 Add.
Lucerna Fidelium (Lóchrann na gCreidmheach) [F. Ó Maolmhuaidh], 350, 351, 352, 353, 406, 407.
Madhm an Árda Bhig, 367.
'Me Guidhir Fhearmanach,' 297, 403.
'O'Davoren's Glossary,' 330, 375.
Oidheadh Chloinne Uisnigh, 360.
——— Conculaind, 318.
——— Ferghusa, 317, 328.
Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis, 338 Add.
Párliment na bhFigheadóirí [D. do Barra], 223, 286.
'Passions and Homilies from the Leabhar Breac,' 218, 277, 304, 311, 363, 391.
Riaghail na Sacart, 121.
Scél Mucci Mic Dá-thó, 389.
Senbriathra Fíthail, 3, 143, 281, 285, 286, 288, 333.
Senchus Mór, 322.
Serglige Conculaind, 279.
Stair Éamuinn Uí Chléire [S. Ó Neachtain], 4, 53, 132, 157, 366, 367, 368.
Táin Bó Cualnge, 134, 282, 371, 415.
Tecosca Cormaic, 279, 286.
'Three Fragments of Irish Annals,' 134 Add. 292.
'Three Middle-Irish Homilies,' 278, 300.

Tochmarc Becfola, 280.
——— Étaíne, 76 Add., 275, 295, 387.
——— Ferbe, 416.
Tóraidheacht Dhiarmada agus Ghráinne, 119, 133, 170, 227, 309, 409.
——— Shaidhbhe, 370 ff.
'Triads of Ireland,' 67, 108, 236.
Trí Biorghaoithe an Bháis [S. Céitinn], 57, 349, 395.

AUTHORS QUOTED (VERSE)

[With five exceptions all the references below are to verse. For prose-writers see under Index of Texts *supra*. The many quotations from poems of unknown authorship cannot, of course, be referred to here. It is hardly necessary to say that the works ascribed to such very early authors as Cormac mac Airt are not to be taken as genuine.]

Ádhamhnán (†704), 282.
Mac Aodhagáin, Anluan (*fl. circ.* 1610), 399.
——— Baothghalach Ruadh, (*fl.* 1651). 294, 370.
Mac Artúir, Roibeard, (*fl.* 1610-1627), 57, 402, 404.
Mac an Bhaird, Eoghan Ruadh (16-17 cent.), 320, 324.
——— Fearghal Óg (16-17c.), 75, 275, 358.
——— Uilliam Óg (†1576), 329.
Bearchán (6th c.), 284.
Ó Briain, Seán (18th c.), 333.
Ó Bruadair, Dáibhí (†1698), 357, 399.

Mac Bruaideadha, Domhnall (*fl.* 1570), 364, 370.
——————Maoilín Óg (†1602), 313, 359.
—————— Seán Buidhe (14th c.), 326.
—————— Tadhg mac Dáire (*fl.* 1580-1624), 30, 52, 163, 330, 360, 390, 392.
Do Búrc, Riocard (16th or 17th c.?), 238 Add., 316.
Ón Cháinte, Fearfeasa (*fl.* 1610), 36, 301, 340, 346, 402.
Mac Cairtéain, Conchubhar (†1737), 362.
Ó Caiside, Éamonn (*fl.* 1690), 276 Add.
Ó Caoimh, Art Óg (*fl.* 1620), 30, 348.
Mác Cárthaigh, Diarmaid mac Sheáin Bhuidhe (†1705), 331, 401, 409.
Ó Cléirigh, Lughaidh (*fl.* 1615), 313, 379, 385. See also Index of Texts.
Ó Cobhthaigh, Muircheartach (16th c.), 104 Add.
Columcille (†597), 51, 277, 330. See also Betha Colaim Chille (Index of Texts).
Ó Conaill, Seán (*fl.* 1655), 358.
Ó Conchubhair, Cathal (1710-1791), 396.
Mac Conmidhe, Brian Ruadh (15th c.), 360.
——————Giollabrighde (*fl.* 1249), 385.
Cormac mac Airt (3rd c.), 104, 279. See also Tecosca Cormaic (Index of Texts).
Cormac mac Cuileannáin (†908), 282.
Mac Cruitín, Aindrias (*fl.* 1703-1734), 409.
—————— Aodh Buidhe (†1755), 350.
Ó Dálaigh, Aonghus mac Cearbhaill Bhuidhe (†1420), 299.
—————— Aonghus Fionn (*fl.* 1600), 104, 163, 213, 285, 312, 343, 358.
——————Donnchadh Mór (†1244), 104.
——————Gofraidh Fionn (†1387), 14 Add., 104, 281, 286, 326, 408.

———— Muireadhach Albanach (*fl.* 1213), 281.
Ó Doirnín, Peadar (†1768), 400.
Ó Domhnaill, Aodh (*fl.* 1610), 14, 301, 404.
———— Maghnus (†1563), 319, 410. See also Index of Texts.
———— Maghnus (*fl.* 1700), 397.
Ó Donnaoile, Eoghan (*fl.* 1689), 413.
Dubh-dá-thuath (†783), see p. 169.
Mac Dubhghaill, Feidhlim (? date), 280.
Dubthach moccu Lugair (5th c.), 322.
Mac Eochadha, Fearghal mac Tomáis (16th c.), 191.
Feiriteur, Piaras (*fl.* 1640), 346.
Fínghein (9th c.), see p. 169.
Ó Gadhra, Seán (*fl.* 1710), 346.
Mac Gearailt, Muiris mac Dháibhí Dhuibh (*fl. circ.* 1620), 364.
Mac Giollapádraig, Brian (†1652), 358.
Ó Glíosáin, Tomás (18th c.), 355.
Gormlaith (†919), 61.
Haiceud, Pádraigín (†1654), 117, 341, 356, 369, 396.
Ó Heoghusa, Eochaidh (*fl.* 1595), 75, 173 Add., 344, 404.
———— Giollabrighde (†1614), 336, 344.
Ó Hifearnáin, Mathghamhain (*fl.* 1600), 153 Add.
———— Muircheartach (17th c.), 279.
Ó Huiginn, Cormac (*fl.* 1590), 157 Add.
———— Maoileachlainn (*fl.* 1600), 282.
———— Maolmhuire (*fl.* 1600), 75, 331.
———— Mathghamhain (16th c.), 363.
———— Tadhg Dall (*fl.* 1580), 200, 285, 316, 322, 338.
———— Tadhg Mór (†1315), 13.
———— Tadhg Óg (†1448), 313, 314.

Ó Hurthaile, Seán son of Muiris (16th c.?), 341.
Mac Lochlainn, Domhnall Gorm (*fl. circ.* 1700), 301.
Ó Maolchonaire, Fearfeasa (*fl.* 1646), 285.
Merriman, Brian (†1805), 329, 383.
Mac Muireadhaigh, Diarmaid (*fl. circ.* 1685), 14 Add.
Ó Murchadha, Seán na Ráithineach (1700-1762), 3.
————————Uilliam (an Mhaoláin) (*fl. circ.* 1700), 61 Add.
Raftery, Antoine (†1835), 100.
Ó Raithile, Aogán (*fl.* 1720), 399.
Ó Ruanadha, Niall (*fl. circ.* 1590), 334.
Ó Sléibhín, Giollacomhghaill (†1031), 289.
Ó Súilleabháin, Diarmaid mac Dhomhnaill, etc. (18th c.), 365.
————————Tomás Ruadh (†1848), 401 Add.
Ó Tuama, Seán (†1775), 224.

Manx proverbs quoted: 4, 36, 50, 104, 130, 149, 189, 229, 287, 331, 357.

*Welsh proverbs quoted: 75, 76, 104, 128, 134, 175, 209, 275, 277, 279, 287, 306, 324, 330, 345, 346, 398.

Northern English proverbs quoted (mostly borrowed from Scottish Gaelic): 3, 4, 42, 83, 88, 97 Add., 230, 331, 335, 357, 408; pp. 126, 148.

English and Scottish-Gaelic proverbs are quoted *passim*.

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* In connection with these Welsh proverbs I have to thank Professor Ifor Williams, of Bangor, for help in tracing the earliest printed examples of each.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The quotations from LL. 147b (*supra* nos. 4, 78, 104, 275, 278, 279, 284, 286, 288, 292 and 338) are from a poem beginning *Diambad messe bad rí réil.* Since the preceding pages were written this poem has been edited by Prof. Tadhg O'Donoghue, in 'Ériu' ix. pp. 43 ff. In LL. the poem is anonymous, but in other MSS. it is ascribed to Dubh dá Thuath or to Fínghein.

Ulster versions of proverbs have been quoted above rather more sparingly than versions from other provinces. Those interested in Ulster proverbs will find a comprehensive collection in Énrí Ó Muirgheasa's 'Seanfhocla Uladh.' A few additional Ulster variants are quoted from MacAdam below.

10. Delete comparison with Cork proverb.

14. Cf. *a dhúthchas téid tair oileamhuin*, Diarmaid Mac Muireadhaigh (Walsh's 'Gleanings from Irish MSS.,' p. 89). Compare also the proverb *Deallaigh gach cú re a cinéal*, 'Every hound takes after its breed,' Gofraidh Fionn (Ériu, v. 62); in a poem of *circ.* 1640, *Diallach re a chuaine an coilén* (Walsh's 'Gleanings,' p. 61). In Scottish, *gach cuilean a' dol ri dualchas* (Cameron).

30. *'Se an t-uisge is éadomhuine is mó tormán*, 'The shallowest water makes the greatest noise,' MacAdam 271.

50. *Cha dtig an bás gan adhbhar*, MacAdam 382.

57. Quoted by the ex-friar Tomás Ó Caiside in his picaresque autobiography: *Do ghlac mé*

'na bhriseadh é óir is fearr teitheadh maith ná droch-sheasamh (cf. 23 O 35, p. 67).

58. *Is fálta duine a gclúid dhuine eile*, 'A man is shy in another man's corner,' MacAdam 185.

60, 67. An anonymous poem (St. A. iv. 2, fo. 69b) begins:

Beag sochar na sír-mheisge
don droing leanas dá béasa;
a gcantar lé don fhírinne
cuid is fearra dá tréithe.

61. A poem by Uiliam (an Mhaoláin) Ó Murchadha has the line *'S mo ghuala maol gan dearbhráthair* (23 C 19, p. 305). Cf. *Toll taobh ó bheith gan bhráthair*, Buile Shuibhne, p. 54.

63. Thus in a poem in H. 5. 3, p. 42 (transcribed *circ.* 1697):

Folach don chaénach féuch nach ttacrann an līog
Reatha; dá rēir sin déinsi fas ag do mhnaoi.

76. Compare *Dāigh neich andiaigh a shūla* in verse in 'Tochmarc Étaíne' (Ir. T. i. 123), *i.e.* 'Everyone hopes for (or desires) what he sees.' This, too, would appear to be the force of the Sc. proverb *sūil do nī sealbh* (Edinb. MS.), though Nicolson (p. 234) renders it 'The eye makes wealth.' In a quatrain in the Rennes Irish MS. the lines occur *Mairg darb sealbh súil . . . Bídh an tsúil do shíor | mar a mbíonn an grádh* (RC. xv. 81; xvi. 420).

78. *Ceilt na hoirbhire an annsa* is the first line of an anonymous bardic poem (St. A. v. 2, fo. 16a).

97. N.E. has "The priest christens his ain bairn first."

98-99. These two together may be intended to form one proverb, as Prof. Tadhg O'Donoghue has suggested to me.

100. Edward Lhuyd quotes *As fearr deaghnuidhe no ro deaghnuidhe* (*sic*) in his preface in broken Irish to his Ir.-Eng. Dictionary (Arch. Brit., 1707, p. 311).

103. Another instance of the proverb referred to in the note occurs in the Irish 'William of Palermo' (St. A. v. 2, fo. 136a): *B[h]eith umhal dá thighearna* '| *aseadh d[h]ligheas gach óglāch.*

104. So in a poem by Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh (23 D 14, p. 67): *Ní fághthar tuile nach tráigh.*

134. Compare also *Brisídh* (leg. *-idh*) *go hobann cath ar bur naimdibh, gur ro mara bhur cclū tré bhiothu,* 'Three Fragments of Irish Annals,' p. 182; and the following, spoken by Conn, in Cath Muighe Léana' (p. 100), *Aseadh as cóir dhamhsa do dhéanamh, an ní bhus ceannach blaidhe, eadhōn bás, agas méaraidh m' fheidhm agas m' ágh a n-aoinfheacht.*

152. The *Domhnall Buidhe* referred to in the West Muns. proverb was Domhnall Buidhe Mác Cártha, of South Kerry, who died in 1752 at the age of 112, after having been five times married (see Kerry Arch. Magazine, Apl. 1915, pp. 128-131).

153. Compare, in a poem by Math. Ó Hifearnáin: *An mhaith do bhí, ná bí dhi;* | *an mhaith atá tar tairsi,* 'Have nought to do with the good that once was; celebrate [instead] the good that now is' (cf. O'Gr. Cat. 392).

157. So *Gnáth rath a mbun an chaite*, Cormac Ó Huiginn, H. 4. 15, p. 101.

173. Compare the following in a poem by Eochaidh Ó Heóghusa (23 L 17, fo. 77a):

Créad acht taithbheoghadh toile
fearg an aosa ionmhoine?
ní ceisd codladh ar chneidh slán,
mar sin do chogadh compán.

'What else is the anger of friends but the renewing of affection? It is easy to forget a wound that rankles not; thus it is with the quarrel of companions.' There is a very similar quatrain in an anonymous poem of the same period ('Studies,' 1921, p. 588):

Gidh eodh, ní turnamh toile
fearg an aosa ionmhoine:
'na dheaghuidh as daingne a ngrádh,
deadhuil chaingne na ccumpán.

'And yet the anger of friends is no lowering of affection: firmer is the love of comrades after the breaking of their covenant.'

178. *Is teann gach madadh air a charnān féin*, MacAdam 210.

180. If this has been interpreted correctly, we may compare the Scottish *Olc mu'n fhàrdaich 'us math mu'n rathad mhór*, 'Bad at home and good abroad,' Nicolson 336 (and cf. similar proverbs *ib.* pp. 170, 173, 290).

232 ff. In 'An Lóchrann,' April, 1918, 'An Seabhac' has printed 41 Triads from the South of Ireland, of which 14 are not included in the present volume, the remaining 27 being either identical with or variants of the triads given above Owing to an accident I missed seeing

cf Macintosh: Eafacach a muigh is furèineach a steach.

this number of 'An Lóchrann' until the preceding pages had been printed.

238. Compare the following lines by Riocard do Búrc (Dánta Gradha, p. 47):

Beag do hórduigheadh ar dtúis
an t-each, an chú, 's an bhean.

'A steed, a hound, and a woman were in the beginning ordained to be small.'

245. Canon O'Leary's version is *Dealg múnlaighe, fiacal chon, nó focal amadáin, na trí neithe is géire ar bith* (Mo Sgéal Féin, p. 156; Don Cíochóté, p. 244).

274. So in the Irish 'William of Palermo': *As ann as mó dearbhthar an caradradh, an úair os aidhbhile an t-ēigentus*, St. A. v. 2 fo. 138a (also paraphrased in verse, *ib.* fo. 138b).

276. Cf. *Nī beo nech gan nāirc ann*, Éamonn Ó Caiside (ZCP. ii. 363).

282. Compare *Tāinic forcheann mo shoegailsi, 7 nocha nfhēduim gan dul gus in ionadh in rocinnedh dhamh ég d'fhagháil*, 'The end of my life has come, and I must needs go to the place in which I am destined to die,' Buile Shuibhne, p. 104.

292. The following version occurs in the Irish 'William of Palermo': *Ní ré hiomad ríogh nó ridireadh brisdear cath nó comhlonn acht re grásaibh an Spiorad Naoímh*, St. A. v. 2, fo. 148a (a paraphrase in verse follows, *ibid.*).

312. Compare *do rinne mé maith ar son an uilc air*, Eachtra Thomáis Uí Chaiside (cf. 23 O 35, p. 64).

313. *On áird thuaidh tig an chabhoir* occurs also in a poem of *circ.* 1640, Walsh's 'Gleanings from Irish MSS.' p. 63, 1, 2.

338. Compare *an tí budh treise do bheith a n-uachtar*, 'that the strongest should be on top,' Pairlement Chl. Tomáis, l. 1845 (and still current).

345. The ex-friar, Tomás Ó Caiside, says in his autobiography: *Thugas na móide, mo léan, | mar bheir an duine dona duibhléim* (cf. 23 O 35, p. 58), 'Alas! I made my vows, even as an unlucky man takes a fatal plunge.'

349. In Waterford the second phrase referred to runs *ó b'annamh leis an gcat srathair a chur air*, and is used as in Kerry (Sheehan's 'Cnuasacht Trágha,' p. 25).

401. In a Kerry folk-tale published in An Cl. Soluis, 4 Feb. 1911, I find: *Sin é 'ruchar an daill fé'n bhfaill' nó 'léim chaorach i nduibheagán.'* This agrees with Diarmaid mac Sheáin Bhuidhe. (For *léim chaorach i nduibheagán*, well known to-day, cf. 'Songs of Tomás Ruadh O'Sullivan,' p. 112).

H uile fear gu cheard 's mac
a Cheard gu Cheann

Slacan Dearg an tighe an dotha

Na comhla m na daoine ghlic
's ea thu fhéin ghlic.

'S minic a chunnaic fuidheall
feachd agus a chaidh
fuidheall fearmaid a dholaidh.

'S minic a chunnaic am
beadarrach 's a chaidh an
neadarrach a dholaidh.

Chau eil air an duine Lhona ael
a bheath : Cf. no. 345